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AN

ANALYSIS

OF THE

PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

OF THE LATE

Lord Viſcount BOLINGBROKE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE works here analized are the five volumes publiſhed in octavo; and no notice is taken of any thing in them, but what relates to religion natural and revealed. What his Lordſhip has allowed in favour of theſe, is firſt ſet in one view, under the following heads, The force of prejudices and paſſions . . . The neceſſity of religion to government . . . The nature of man . . . The being, and perfections, and providence of God, and our duty to Him . . . Future rewards and puniſhments . . . Of angels and demons . . . The want, and expediency, and authority of a revelation . . . The proper proofs of Divine Revelation . . . Of the canon of Scripture . . . Of Moſes, his hiſtory, and law . . . Of Jeſus Chriſt, and his apoſtles . . . The truth, perfection, and uſefulneſs of Chriſtianity . . . Grace, myſteries, and ſacraments . . . The clergy, external religion, and the reformation . . .

Afterwards, theſe particulars are ſeverally reviewed; the juſt conſequences of his Lordſhip's conceſſions ſhewn; and the chief things, which he has thought proper to urge againſt them regularly extracted. Theſe alſo are ſhortly and candidly anſwered, either from his own words, or from other conſiderations, in the plaineſt manner.

This is the deſign, and the method, of the following treatiſe. May the reader find it uſeful and ſatisfactory?

ERRATA.

PAGE 2. l. 15. read *this natural religion.* p. 11, l. ult. read *ſentiment.* p. 19. l. 13. read p. 318. marg. p. 21. l. 18. read *at leaſt.* p. 22. l. 22. read *Chriſt, his apoſtles.* p. 25. l. 11. read *refined precepts.* p. 32. l. 10. read *theſe errors.* p. 45. l. 16. read *making man.* p. 46. l. 25. read *crimes.* l. 27. read *puniſhments.* p. 48. l. 22. read *impartiality.* p. 50. l. 5. only a comma after *nature.* l. 7. marg. read *See Vol.* l. 14. read *intent of the maker.* p. 51. l. 16. read *that this knowledge muſt have.* p. 60. l. 7. marg. read *See Vol.* 5. l. 11. read *of an hell.* p. 65. l. 9. read *eternal.* p. 72. l. 21. dele comma after *allows.* p. 74. l. 10. read *imperfectly.* p. 80. l. 3. marg. read p. 179. p. 88. l. 2. read *Socrates.* p. 89. l. 17. read *form.* p. 91. l. 24. read *can be,* p. 94. l. 16. read *your Scriptures,* and ſo in the three next pages. p. 102. l. 12. read *have admitted.* p. 104. l. 3. read *would he.* p. 106. l. 9. read *leave.* p. 111. l. 3. read *beaſts.* p. 113. l. 22. read *our ſolar.* p. 114. l. 16. read *anecdotes.* p. 118. l. 25. read *the truth . . . received this.* p. 124. l. 27. read *Phiſico.* p. 126. l. ult. read *conſider theſe.* p. 144. l. 20. read *puzzled in.*

AN ANALYSIS, &c.

I.

The force of prejudices and paſſions.

THE more important notions are, the more liable they are likewiſe to be abuſed by prejudices and habits, that infect the mind, and put a wrong biaſs on it. Vol. I. p. 13.

Human affections and paſſions mingle in their enquiries, as they often do; for philoſophers are not free from them. p. 55.

Our affections and paſſions put frequently a biaſs ſo ſecret, and yet ſo ſtrong, on our judgments, as to make them ſwerve from the direction of right reaſon. Vol. II. p. 91.

II.

The neceſſity of religion to government.

Vol. I. p. 326. CIVIL government cannot ſubſiſt well without religion.

Vol. II. p. 228. A community of Atheiſts never exiſted out of Mr. Bayle's head.

Vol. III. p. 45. That religion is neceſſary to ſtrengthen government cannot be denied.

p. 67. The good effects of maintaining, and the bad effects of neglecting religion, had been extremely viſible in the whole courſe of the Roman government.

p. 330. To make government effectual to all the good purpoſes of it, there muſt be a religion; this religion muſt be national; and the national religion muſt be maintained in reputation and reverence; all other religions or ſects muſt be kept too low to become the rivals of it. Theſe are, in my apprehenſion, firſt principles of good policy.

p. 331. A teſt and toleration, the two moſt compatible things in the world.

Vol. IV. p. 394. In the world ancient and modern, the general ſtate of mankind increaſes in happineſs,

neſs, or declines to miſery, as virtue or vice prevails in their ſeveral ſocieties.

III.

The nature of Man.

THE ſole criterion we have of immaterial ſpirit is our own ſpirit. Vol. I. p. 101.

That we live, and move, and think according to certain human modes of thinking, and that there muſt be ſomething in the conſtitution of our ſyſtem of being, beyond the known properties of matter, to produce ſuch phænomena, as theſe, are undeniable truths. p. 206.

We have clear and determinate ideas of what we call body by ſenſation, and of what we call ſpirit by reflection. p. 226.

I would aſk, whether the conſcious knowlege we have of the reciprocal action of body and mind be not founded in greater certainty, than the knowlege we ſhould have of the conatus accedendi, this mutual tendency of body to body? It muſt be allowed to be ſo. p. 263.

The argument, which may be drawn from the intelligence whereof we are Vol. II. p. 251.

conſcious, to a Firſt Intelligence, infinite, and eternal, which is the original of all intelligence, and the firſt cauſe of all things, is plain and obvious to the conception of every rational creature.

Vol.III. p. 169. Man is owned to be placed in the loweſt rank of intelligent beings and moral agents.

p. 376. Intellect is certainly above the mere powers of motion and figure, according to all the ideas we have of them.

Vol.IV. p. 2. Reaſon we ſay is peculiar to man; and ſo we may ſay properly enough, whether we conceive this faculty in man and beaſt to be wholly different in kind, or whether we conceive it to be vaſtly tranſcendent in man.

p. 316. Man is moſt apparently ſuperior to other animals . . . the principal inhabitant of this planet.

p. 387. Men have more to learn and more to do than other animals, are prepared for a more improved ſtate, and for greater happineſs.

p. 388. His happineſs exceeds that of his fellow creatures, at leaſt as much as the dignity of his nature exceeds the dignity of theirs.

God,

God, when he gave us reaſon, left us p. 392.
to our freewill to make a proper or improper uſe of it: ſo that we are obliged to our Creator for a certain rule and ſufficient means of arriving at happineſs, and have none to blame but ourſelves, when we fail of it.

Man is a religious, as well as a ſocial Vol. V.
creature, made to know and to adore his p. 97.
Creator, to diſcover and to obey his will.

Greater powers of reaſon, and means of p. 98.
knowlege, have been meaſured out to us than to other animals, that we might be able to fulfill the ſuperior purpoſes of our deſtination, whereof religion is, no doubt, the chief.

IV.

The being and perfections and providence of God, and our duty to him.

TO ſay that God was known and not Vol. II.
worſhipped, is little leſs abſurd, than p. 218.
it would be to ſay, that he was worſhipped and not known.

The knowlege and worſhip of the one p. 232.
true God muſt have been known from the beginning, by all the people of the earth.

p. 278. Our reaſon is ſufficient, unaſſiſted, to demonſtrate what is neceſſary concerning God's exiſtence, nature, and attributes, his providence over his creatures, and their duties to him and one another.

Vol.III. p. 388. That men ſhould worſhip and obey God, is as fit, as it is true that they depend upon him.

p. 392. Even on the ſuppoſition of eternal neceſſary differences, and independent natures, it would be ſtill true, that the will of God conſtitutes the obligation of duty.

Vol.IV. p. 19. Of the fitneſs of God's acting we are in no degree competent judges.

p. 30. God is the firſt and greateſt object of our gratitude, reſignation, and hope, and addreſſes.

p. 31. The religion of nature teaches to worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth, i. e. inwardly and ſincerely.

p. 175. To keep up a due ſenſe of our dependance on God, for which purpoſe prayer may be a very uſeful, and conſequently a very rational, expedient, is the duty of every man.

p. 223. There are no arguments but à poſteriori, to prove the firſt cauſe to be intelligent.

A neceſſary connection between the natural and moral attributes of God, no man who believes in him will deny. p. 224.

The care of man has not been neglected by God ... God neither contrives nor executes like man. His means are ſimple, his purpoſes various; and the ſame ſyſtem, that anſwers the greateſt, anſwers the leaſt. p. 326.

The wiſdom is not ſo often diſcernable by us, as the power of God; nor the goodneſs, as the wiſdom. But a multitude of the phænomena being conformable to our ideas of goodneſs, it is the higheſt abſurdity not to acknowlege it in all ... More good than evil here experienced. p. 328.

The evils, which may be ſaid to come from God, are, for the moſt part, ſoon over; but ambition, avarice, and other ruling paſſions, are never ſated: and the ſame perſons expoſe themſelves anew and continually, to all the evils that accompany the perſuit of them. p. 337.

How ſhould finite meaſure infinite? God's manner of knowing is ours no more, than his manner of being. p. 355.

Mens greateſt evils are from themſelves, not from God ... General calamities p. 388.

may be conſidered as chaſtiſements; for chaſtiſements are reaſonable, when there are any to be amended by partaking in them, or by being at leaſt ſpectators of them: in this light they ſhould teach mankind to adore and to fear that Providence, which governs the world by particular as well as general diſpenſations.

p. 396. I ſhould rouſe in my mind a grateful ſenſe of theſe advantages above all others; that I am a creature capable of knowing, of adoring, and worſhipping my Creator, capable of diſcovering his will in the law of my nature, and capable of promoting my happineſs by obeying it,

Vol. V. I do not deny particular providences.

p. 14. To keep up a belief of particular provi-

p. 34. dences, ſerves to keep up a belief ... of the efficacy of prayer ... and of the rites of external devotion.

p. 95. In the works of men, the moſt complicated ſchemes produce very hardly and very uncertainly, one ſingle effect. In the works of God, one ſingle ſcheme produces a multitude of different effects, and anſwers an immenſe variety of purpoſes.

We muſt believe, if we think worthily of the Supreme Being, that he will not proceed with his human creatures, in any ſtate, in violation of that juſtice which he has conſtituted in the nature of things, and whereof he has made them able to acquire ideas and notions. p. 148.

By natural religion we are taught to aſcribe goodneſs and juſtice to God, wherever he intended that we ſhould ſo aſcribe them, i. e. wherever either his works or the diſpenſations of his providence do as neceſſarily communicate theſe notions to our minds, as thoſe of wiſdom and power are communicated to us in the whole extent of both. p. 168.

An all-perfect, ſelf-exiſtent Being, the ſource of all exiſtence, inviſible and incomprehenſible; the author, not only of all that is viſible and comprehenſible to his creatures, but of all that is in the whole extent of nature, whether viſible or comprehenſible to them or not. p. 226.

I incline to think, that the unity of a Firſt Intelligent Cauſe, was the original belief of mankind. p. 309.

V.

V.

Future rewards and puniſhments.

Vol. I. p. 270. I would not deny the immortality of the ſoul.

p. 271. The doctrine of future rewards and puniſhments (which is no doubt a great reſtraint on men) ſuppoſes the immortality of the ſoul.

p. 354. By the heathen myſteries . . . to enforce leſſons of morality and habits of piety, that great ſanction, which conſiſts in the rewards and puniſhments of another life, and which had been added very wiſely to the law of nature . . . was inculcated ſo, that every man muſt apply it to himſelf.

Vol. II. p. 294. Sanctions of this law are implied in the theiſtical ſcheme . . . hence future rewards and puniſhments invented . . ſecret thoughts thus affected.

Vol. III. p. 46. The ſanction of the law of religion is eternal puniſhments in another life.

p. 374. God has given us a manner of knowing fitted to our ſyſtem, and ſufficient for all our real buſineſs in it. We can conceive no other. But is there then no other?

Rewards

Rewards and puniſhments in a future ſtate began to be taught long before we have any light into antiquity; and when we begin to have any, we find it eſtabliſhed ... This owing to a natural deſire to exiſt. Vol. IV. p. 206.

This belief could not fail to have ſome effect on the manners of men, to encourage virtue, and to reſtrain vice. p. 207.

Reaſon will not deny that there is to be a future ſtate: and the doctrine of rewards and puniſhments in it has ſo great a tendency to enforce civil laws, and to reſtrain the vices of men, that reaſon ... will not decide againſt it on principles of good policy. Let this doctrine reſt on the authority of revelation. A theiſt, who does not believe the revelation, can have no objection to the doctrine in general. p. 311.

Different natures deſigned for different purpoſes. p. 324.

No doctrines more inculcated than thoſe of a future ſtate ... which excited devotion. p. 346.

We wiſh to be immortal ... Nonentity is not reconcileable to my inward ſentiments. p. 398.

The

Vol. V. p. 121. The opinion of the terrors of another life . . . would do ſome good moſt certainly, and it could do no hurt.

p. 125. The ancient and modern Epicureans provoke my indignation, when they boaſt, as a mighty acquiſition, their pretended certainty, that the body and ſoul dye together. If they had this certainty then, would the diſcovery be ſo very comfortable?

p. 144. To reform offenders is neither the ſole, nor the principal, end of puniſhments. Thoſe of an inferior kind may have this intention. Thoſe that are capital, muſt have ſome other . . . The criminal is executed for the ſake of others.

p. 145. Clandeſtine puniſhments may contribute in ſome degree to the good of ſociety, by putting out of it ſuch as are hurtful to it.

p. 215. There may be rewards and puniſhments reſerved in another life.

p. 356. . . . . on the Jews, terrors of puniſhment, future as well as preſent, eternal as well as temporary, could never be too much multiplied, nor too ſtrongly inculcated.

VI.

Of angels and demons.

THE diſtinction of the good and evil demons . . . had been eſtabliſhed in the remoteſt antiquity. Vol. II. p. 20.

There may be created minds or intelligences much ſuperior to ours. p. 146.

We hold no very exalted rank among the intellectual creatures of God. p. 278.

There is a gradation from man, through various forms of ſenſe, intelligence, and reaſon, up to beings, who cannot be known by us, becauſe of their diſtance from us, and whoſe rank in the intellectual ſyſtem is even above our conception. Vol. IV. p. 320.

VII.

The want and expediency and authority of a revelation.

IT may be ſaid, that an extraordinary action of God on the human mind, which the word inſpiration is now uſed to denote, is not more inconceivable than the ordinary action of mind on body, and of Vol. I. p. 154.

body

body on mind: and I confeſs that it is not.

p. 268. It would be for the intereſt of the immateriality and immortality of the ſoul, and by conſequence of the rewards and puniſhments of a future ſtate, and ſeveral other doctrines, to let them reſt on the authority of revelation ... revelation apart, there is no poſitive or determining proof of any of theſe doctrines.

Vol. II. p. 282. When a revelation has all the authenticity of human teſtimony, when it appears conſiſtent in all its parts, and when it contains nothing inconſiſtent with any real knowlege, which we have of the ſupreme all-perfect Being, and of natural religion, ſuch a revelation is to be received with the moſt profound reverence, the moſt entire ſubmiſſion, and the moſt unfeigned thankſgiving.

Vol. II. p. 306. Revelation was given to enforce the practice of morality by a ſuperior authority.

p. 371. When the truth of a revelation is eſtabliſhed, we are to believe implicitly.

p. 386. The authority of revelation confirming that of Plato.

There

There are many things unintelligible p. 390.
in the ancient philoſophers, many inconſiſtent and contradictory, even among thoſe who wrote with the greateſt clearneſs and preciſion; for I except neither Cicero nor Seneca.

... the two nobleſt gifts of God to man, Vol.III.
natural reaſon, and ſupernatural revelation. p. 309.

The law of nature is not univerſally Vol.IV.
known. p. 22.

The firſt principles of every thing, p. 41.
that requires human underſtanding, and human induſtry to be imployed about it, are rightly laid in nature; they are obvious to our ſearch, and we are able to diſcover and perſue the conſequences of them in ſpeculation and in practice. But in doing this, we are left, as I may ſay, to ourſelves. We owe the firſt diſcoveries to our own obſervation, and the progreſs we make afterwards to the ſtrength of our own underſtandings, to our application and induſtry. We may do this well or ill; we may do too little or attempt too much, according to the uſe, and the right or wrong judgment we make of our faculties;

for

for the bona et mala ratio, that Cotta inſiſts upon ſo much, is nothing elſe.

p. 98. . . . reaſon not given to all alike.

p. 101. The law is plain, but the precepts it contains are general.

p. 173. Expiatory ſacrifices owned to be ancient and univerſal.

p. 178. Plato inſinuates in many places, the want or the neceſſity of a divine revelation to diſcover the external ſervice God requires, and the expiation for ſin, to give ſtronger aſſurances of the rewards and puniſhments that await men in another world . . . and to frame a ſyſtem of God's government in heaven and earth.

p. 181. In natural theology the knowlege of the philoſophers was confined to a very few general propoſitions.

p. 186. The heathen philoſophers had not ſufficient means of reforming mankind.

p. 245. As nothing ſhould be neglected, that may enforce moral obligations, and all the duties of natural religion, ſo nothing may ſeem in ſpeculation ſo proper to this purpoſe as a true revelation, or a revelation believed to be true.

Reaſon is ſober and modeſt. She never affects to lead men beyond her bounds, but delivers them over to revelation. p. 252.

A future ſtate was ſanctified by revelation . . . with the immortality of the ſoul. Thus theſe deſerve our reſpect, and challenge the implicit belief of every chriſtian. p. 350.

Some theiſts rather hoped, than believed, the immortality of the ſoul. p. 351.

No perfect virtue to be found among the ſons of men. p. 396.

VIII.

The proper proofs of divine revelation.

MIracles, real miracles can be operated by no power, but that of God. Vol. II. p. 213.

High probability muſt ſtand often in lieu of certainty; or we muſt be, every moment, at a loſs how to form our opinions, and to regulate our conduct. Vol. V. p. 231.

A fact, of which we find no preciſe example within our knowlege, may have a conformity properly ſo called, with our experience . . . we may diſcover, in our experience, none of the ſame ſort; and yet none, that imply contradiction with it. p. 232, p. 233.

p. 304. I conſult my reaſon, indeed, to examine, whether the fact implies contradiction; no more: and when I find that it does not, I receive it for true, on the faith of human teſtimony, which is the proper proof to me of every fact, whereof I have not been myſelf a witneſs.

IX.

Of the Canon of Scripture.

Vol. II. p. 211. THE Bible is to be believed.

p. 215. I aſſert the authority of the Bible, and endeavour to place it out of the reach of cavil.

p. 338. The Epiſtles were writ .... before St. John died.

Vol. III. p. 19. St. Matthew's and St. John's accounts of Chriſt's acts and doctrines are true.

p. 20. Chriſtianity every where ſuppoſes the authenticity and divinity of the Jewiſh Scripture.

p. 39. The Apocalypſe paſſed for a compoſition of the Evangeliſts, and maintained great credit, as ſuch, in the church for ſome centuries before the council of Laodicea, A. D. 360.

I do indeed admit the goſpels on the teſtimony of the fathers and doctors of the church, who not only bear this teſtimony ſeparately ; but aſſembled in a council at Laodicea, rejecting many other goſpels, made a canon of theſe. p. 332.

A ſameneſs of ſpirit runs through all the hiſtory of Moſes, and appears in all the writings of the Jewiſh prophets. Vol. V. p. 353.

X.

Of Moſes, his hiſtory, and law.

GOD is ſaid to have given himſelf a name to Moſes, a very magnificent one indeed, and ſuch a one as might denote the Supreme Being .... The leaſt part of Moſes's miracles ſufficient to draw all nations from polytheiſm. Vol. I. p. 18.

Chriſtianity founded on the Jewiſh religion and Scripture. See III. 20. Vol. II. p. 333.

Moſes proved his miſſion by miracles. Vol. IV.

A future ſtate was not revealed to Moſes. p. 145.
He therefore made a ſcruple of teaching it. p. 209.

The account of the fall of man is the foundation of the fundamental article of the redemption by Chriſt. p. 263.

p. 317. God is not cruel or unjuſt, becauſe he has not given us impeccable natures.

Vol. V. Certain it is, that the traditions of the
p. 253. Pentateuch are of very great antiquity.

p. 298. The lives of the firſt men were probably much longer than ours.

p. 334. Chriſtianity was founded on Judaiſm, and the New Teſtament ſuppoſes the truth of the Old.

p. 347. That the Iſraelites had a leader and legiſlator called Moſes, is proved by the conſent of foreign, whom I call collateral witneſſes.

p. 357. The law of the Jews exacted from them all the duties neceſſary to maintain peace and good order among themſelves.

p. 368. There are many paſſages in Job, in Iſaiah, in the Pſalms, and in other parts of the Old Teſtament, which give moſt ſublime ideas of the majeſty of the Supreme Being.

p. 370. Was it neceſſary, that Moſes ſhould explain the Copernican ſyſtem? No, moſt certainly.

XI.

XI.

Of Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

THE Divinity of our Saviour was ſufficiently manifeſted under the diſguiſe of humanity. Vol. II. p. 261.

Chriſt taught the duties of natural religion with evangelical ſimplicity. p. 297.

Chriſt certainly had not any need of repentance. p. 312.

The article of Jeſus being the Meſſiah the primary, but not the ſole, object of our faith. p. 328.

St. Paul's goſpel was, in the fundamental principles of it, the ſame as the other Apoſtles. p. 346.

Sabellianiſm gave occaſion to Arianiſm. p. 398.

Chriſt was the greateſt of preachers. Vol. III.

Chriſt was at the leaſt the Meſſiah promiſed by God, foretold by the prophets, and ſent in due time. p. 25. p. 143.

The ſon of God, God himſelf. p. 312.

The law of grace, [viz. Chriſt's deciſion about divorces] was ſuperior in time, [viz. became in time more reſpected,] to the natural and Moſaical law, among Chriſtians. It had a right to be ſo. Vol. IV. p. 122.

p. 144. St. Paul does not, I think, preſcribe any thing directly oppoſite to the law of nature, as the command of God to man.

p. 145. The Apoſtles healed the lame, they cured the blind, and even raiſed the dead, to prove their miſſion.

p. 232. The Son of God, God himſelf, came upon earth, was born of a woman, lived among men, preached a new covenant, wrought miracles, ſent his diſciples to all nations, who eſtabliſhed his church among them.

XII.

The truth, perfection and uſefulneſs of Chriſtianity.

Vol. II. p. 234. THAT our Saviour found the whole world in a ſtate of error concerning the firſt principle of natural religion ... is allowed; and that the ſpreading of Chriſtianity has contributed to deſtroy polytheiſm and idolatry, is true.

p. 235. Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, and the firſt preachers of Chriſtianity, eſtabliſhed this religion by their miracles, and by their ſufferings.

When

When we conſider the great and glorious purpoſes of this revelation, the manner in which, and the Perſon, even the Son of God himſelf, by whom it was made; and all the ſtupendous miracles in the heavens, and on earth, which were wrought to confirm it .... p. 259.

It is for the honour of Chriſtianity to ſtand ſuch examinations, as every pretended revelation declines. p. 268.

No religion ever appeared in the world, whoſe natural tendency was ſo much directed to promote the peace and happineſs of mankind, as the Chriſtian. p. 286.

Chriſtanity is founded on the univerſal law of nature .... teaches the great and fundamental principle of this law univerſal benevolence; recommends the precepts of it, and commands the obſervation of them in particular inſtances occaſionally, always ſuppoſes them, always enforces them, and makes the law of right reaſon a law, in every poſſible definition of the word, beyond all cavil. p. 287.

The ſyſtem of religion, which Chriſt publiſhed, and his Evangeliſts recorded, is a compleat ſyſtem to all the purpoſes of p. 329.

true religion natural and revealed... Chriſt proved his aſſertions by his miracles.

p. 374. Genuine Chriſtianity was taught by God,

Vol. III. Suppoſing Chriſtianity to have been

p. 24. purely an human invention, it had been the moſt amiable and the moſt uſeful invention, that was ever impoſed upon mankind for their good.

Vol. III. Chriſtianity born, if I may ſay ſo, in a

p. 68. deſert, and educated in a little province of the empire, had ſpread thro' the whole in the courſe of three centuries... beyond

p. 83. the bounds of it.

p. 312. A ſyſtem of human law is the product of human underſtanding, and therefore incomplete and imperfect, liable to different conſtructions at all times, and fit to be altered at ſome. But this cannot be ſaid without blaſphemy of the Chriſtian diſpenſation.

p. 331. Chriſtianity, genuine Chriſtianity, is contained in the Goſpels. It is the word of God: it requires therefore our veneration, and a ſtrict conformity to it.

Vol. IV. Chriſtianity has all thoſe proofs, which

p. 22. the manner in which it was revealed, and the nature of it allowed it to have.

p. 23. It was confirmed by miracles, and the proof was no doubt ſufficient for the converſion

verſion of all thoſe, who heard the publication of this doctrine, and ſaw the confirmation of it.

A Chriſtian profeſſes a religion promulgated by God himſelf, and in every point conformable to the law of nature. p. 143.

The goſpel of Chriſt is one continued leſſon of the ſtricteſt morality, of juſtice, of benevolence, and of univerſal charity. p. 144.

Imitating God owned to be among the moſt refined parts of Chriſtian morality. p. 191.

Under the Jewiſh and Chriſtian diſpenſations all the knowlege, and all the means, which are aſſumed to be neceſſary, and to have been deficient in the ſtate of paganiſm, as well as ſome means really wanting to the philoſophers, were amply ſupplied. p. 229.

Future rewards and puniſhments are ſanctions of the evangelical law. Vol. V. p. 151.

Your divines, as well as ours, affirm very truly of the preceptive parts, that tho' natural and revealed religion are diſtinct, yet the difference between them is not a difference of oppoſition. p. 204.

Meekneſs and humility, forgiveneſs of injuries, and benevolence exalted into charity, are the great characteriſtics of Chriſtian religion. p. 205.

XIII.

XIII.

Grace, Myſteries, Sacraments, &c.

Vol. II. p. 308. IT is impoſſible to extinguiſh luſt in the heart without an aſſiſtance unknown to reaſon.

Vol. III. p. 4. I do not mean to exclude abſolutely the influence of grace in making converts to Chriſtianity, tho' I confeſs that I have no conception of it.

Vol. II. p. 311. The Sacraments of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper certainly divine ceremonies.

p. 313. The Sacraments were not only innocent, but profitable ceremonies, becauſe they were extremely proper to keep up the ſpirit of true natural religion by keeping up that of Chriſtianity.

p. 334. Many doctrines in the Goſpel, which reaſon would never have taught, nor is able to comprehend now they are taught.

p. 346. The manner of being of truths being ſtill a myſtery, is no objection to the belief of any thing contained in a revelation once proved to be divine.

Vol. III. p. 171. Man was, according to the Semi-pelagians, to co-operate with God; and ſalvation was open to all who did ſo. This doctrine appears

appears moderate, reaſonable, and no way repugnant to the ideas of divine juſtice and goodneſs.

Nothing more intelligible and reaſonable, than the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, ſince the ſole deſign of it was, that Chriſtians ſhould commemorate in common the death of Chriſt, and the redemption of mankind, as well as ſignify that they were of the ſame religion. p. 278.

Surely to put the ſyſtem of divine wiſdom in execution, and to co-operate with the Creator, is honor enough for the creature. p. 415.

There is, and there needs muſt be, ſomething marvelous in revelation. Vol. IV. p. 252.

I may admit ... that things intirely and exactly conſiſtent with the law of nature, may be ſuperadded to it by the ſame divine authority, though not in a manner equally authentic, and that poſitive precepts may be given about things, which are indifferent by the law of our nature ... and which become obligatory as ſoon as they are enjoyned by ſuch poſitive precepts. Vol. V. p. 193.

There are ſecrets of the divine nature and œconomy, which human reaſon cannot penetrate. p. 225.

XIV.

XIV.

The Clergy, external Religion, the Reformation.

Vol. II. p. 268. OUR divines themſelves exhort us to examine.

p. 325. The ſolemn magnificence of a church, the grave and moving harmony of muſic, the pomp and order of ceremonies decently performed, the compoſed looks, and the myſtical veſtments of the prieſts who perform them; all this, I think, cannot fail to inſpire an awful reſpect, and to maintain a devout attention of mind in the generality.

Vol. III. p. 47. A reſpect for religion begat a reſpect for the clergy.

p. 50. A clergy might co-operate with the civil magiſtrate, very uſefully no doubt, by exhortations and reproofs, and much more by example, in ſubordination to him.

p. 57. Chriſt ſent out his apoſtles to teach and to baptize; and the utmoſt power he gave them, beſides that of working miracles to convince and to convert, was to ſhake off the duſt of their feet ... the apoſtles ordained others to ſucceed them.

The

The eccleſiaſtical authority of the clergy was neceſſary before Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by Conſtantine. p. 81.

The Clergy were all Biſhops, *i. e.* overſeers alike, and co-equal in rank and power, till factions ariſing, one preſbyter was appointed by the apoſtles, or choſen by the faithful, to govern the reſt, and was ſtyled the Biſhop *eminentiæ gratiâ*. p. 186.

The ſtate of Chriſtianity has been mended to the honor of religion, and to the good of mankind, by the reformation, in ſome particulars. p. 292.

Chriſt gave his apoſtles a commiſſion to preach and to baptize, to convert men by the miracles they wrought, and to edify and build up in the faith ſuch as they converted. It does not appear, that they, or their immediate ſucceſſors, exceeded the bounds of this commiſſion. p. 295.

Eccleſiaſtics took the lead in reforming Chriſtianity. p. 297.

The inſtitution of ſynagogues, after the return from the captivity was an effectual means to ſecure the obſervance of the law. Vol. V. p. 364.

THE

THE foregoing pages owe their riſe to a very careful peruſal of the Volumes from which they are extracted. The late right honourable author wrote in the eſſay way; and, as he frequently obſerves, according to the freedom of converſation, not ſtrictly attending to the laws of method. On this account, I thought that it might be both proper and neceſſary to reduce what he has diſperſed in many places to ſome order, and carefully to compare the paſſages together. This ſeemed to be the right way of doing him and the truth both juſtice. This I have therefore endeavoured to do. The method above will I hope be allowed to be extremely plain and regular, and at the ſame time to be comprehenſive enough to take in the chief points of both natural and revealed religion. I have generally given his Lordſhip's own words; and in the few places where I have only repreſented his meaning, or preſumed to make any alteration in them, I hope I cannot be charged with miſtaking his ſenſe. His irony is, I know, very ſtrong. And ſometimes he may be thought to make conceſſions purely for the ſake of argument. But in the far greater number of theſe extracts, I may ſay in almoſt all, he appears to be as ſerious as he ever is, in any

part of theſe philoſophical works. Nor can we think otherwiſe of him, without accuſing him of continual trifling with his correſpondents, and with his readers.

If it be ſaid, as doubtleſs it will be ſaid, that in other parts of theſe books there are many paſſages irreconcileable with thoſe here produced; nay, that the whole deſign and tenor of them appears evidently to be to weaken and deſtroy the credit of moſt of the articles abovementioned; I muſt confeſs, and it is with concern and regret, that I find myſelf obliged to confeſs, that the fact is ſo ... To what purpoſe then, it may be aſked, is this trouble taken to extract and methodize ſo many paſſages, if they will not, after all, ſhew the real ſentiments of the author; or if we cannot collect his authority from them, and plead it in defence of our holy religion? ... I can anſwer very truly, that they were at firſt drawn together out of curioſity, and to help my own memory. And they are now publiſhed in hopes of communicating ſome ſatisfaction to others.

A generous mind can take no pleaſure in expoſing the errors and inconſiſtencies of great men. But if great men will allow themſelves to attack the great truths of the religion believed and eſtabliſhed in their country,

country, and this in the moſt ſcornful and dogmatical manner, which is but too eminently the caſe at preſent; it becomes quite neceſſary, out of regard to the truth, and to our brethren, to prevent ſuch authority from having greater ſtreſs laid upon it than it deſerves, and the ignorant and weak from ſwallowing eagerly all thus advanced. And as this cannot be done without a ſober and zealous oppoſition to their errors, ſuch an oppoſition may be expected and required from every friend and lover of religion.

The Author of theſe papers has neither time nor inclination to oppoſe Lord Bolingbroke's notions in the way of controverſy, at large. Yet he is not without expectations, that the mite, which he now throws into the publick ſervice, may have ſome good effect. So many conceſſions in favour of ſo many parts of our religion, notwithſtanding ſuch ſtrong prejudices againſt moſt of theſe, are very remarkable indeed; and making them ſhows the prevailing force of truth, which will ſometimes operate upon the mind. And the picking them out from ſuch voluminous works, the ſorting them properly, and connecting them together, is placing them in the fulleſt and ſtrongeſt light, and fixing

fixing the reader's attention upon them, much more than if they continued ſcattered in different treatiſes, and mixed with very different reflections. No infidel can now boaſt of this noble author's authority, without owning it to be inconſiſtent; and inconſiſtent authority ought to have no weight. Whoever writes on both ſides of any queſtion, deſerves little or no regard from either.

Indeed, had this happened occaſionally only, or in one or two inſtances, it might have been imputed to forgetfulneſs or overſight; and candor might have paſſed it by in ſo large a work. But ſuch a ſeries of truths, as is now laid before the reader, ſo contradictory to the ſpirit which runs all through theſe philoſophical eſſays, cannot be thus accounted for. And if the friends of revelation have not as good a claim to this great writer as the enemies of it; at leaſt his name ought never to be mentioned to its diſadvantage. It is no very difficult matter from the foregoing extracts to anſwer the principal of the aſſertions, and of the inſinuations, with which theſe eſſays abound, againſt religion both natural and revealed, at leaſt, againſt ſome of the moſt important

articles of both. Together with the poiſon we then have the antidote; but with this difference, that the former occurs perpetually, the latter much more thinly; which however will juſtify the endeavour to ſet this in the cleareſt light.

Who then can be ſo proper to anſwer Lord Bolingbroke, as Lord Bolingbroke? If what I have brought together be juſtly attended to, remembered, and applied; we need be in no ſort of pain about the ill impreſſion, which any other parts of his writings may leave on any fair conſiderate reader. And if perſons will only regard what he ſays againſt religion, they deceive themſelves, and ſhew the partial and prejudiced diſpoſition of their own minds; they are deluded by high colouring and bold expreſſions, and muſt not pretend to make a fair and cool judgment; nor to allow both ſides of theſe moſt important queſtions the ſame juſt and equitable attention and conſideration.

Tho' I decline the entering upon a minute and particular compariſon of all his Lordſhip thought proper to advance; yet I am not willing to ſtop at theſe general reflections. Let us take a ſhort review of the ſeveral heads, under which I have ranged his conceſſions, obſerve the conſequences

which directly flow from them, the influence they ought to have on every fair enquirer, and the oppoſition made againſt them in other parts of theſe writings.

THE firſt head relates to *the force of prejudices and paſſions.* The obſervations here are general. They are inſerted with no other view than to prevent any wonder or ſurprize, which unheeding perſons may entertain, when they ſee others of ſuperior abilities depart from religious principles; and to obviate any prejudices againſt theſe on this account. The noble author has himſelf furniſhed us with a good ſolution of this difficulty; and gives a juſt reaſon, why men, even of capacity, who think in general rightly and judiciouſly in other matters, may err in thoſe of the utmoſt conſequence; and why the ſame evidence, which determines their aſſent and choice in others, may here be thought inſufficient. The reaſon is juſt. Nor do I know that he has ſaid any thing in other parts to take away the force of it. I wiſh we had not ſo many ſtrong examples to confirm it.

THE ſecond head, *the neceſſity of religion,* and of an *eſtabliſhed* religion, *to government,*

is equally clear. Here this politician's ſentiments may expect their full weight. And the direct concluſion from hence is, that the enemies to religion and virtue are the worſt enemies to civil government; and that whoever undertakes needleſsly to unſettle the religious principles of men, to diſturb and perplex their minds, and to abuſe and inſult the received faith and doctrines, contributes all he can to introduce diſorder and confuſion into ſociety. I ſay, needleſsly. For without all doubt, there may be caſes, there have been ſuch, in which it is neceſſary to aſſert clear and important truths, and to diſprove eſtabliſhed errors, when theſe affect the credit, or deſtroy the efficacy, of religion in general, or of Chriſtianity in particular. But even here, if people really intend any good by their oppoſition, the moſt becoming and the ſureſt way of ſucceeding would be, to propoſe their difficulties and objections as humbly and modeſtly as they can, and to attempt to ſupport them only by reaſon and argument. That the many attacks we have known of late againſt the religion of this nation, have not been made in this temper and ſpirit, no one, who has looked into them, can deny or doubt.

They

They are equally inſolent and unneceſſary. Believers have reaſon to be offended, to ſee things they juſtly eſteem ſacred treated with a levity moſt unſuitable to their nature. And every friend of our conſtitution muſt highly diſapprove of ſuch bold attempts to prejudice men againſt a religion, on which our laws are built, and the truth of which they continually ſuppoſe.

We ſee under the twelfth head, that what Lord Bolingbroke here ſays of religion in general, he allows to be true of Chriſtianity, that it is beſt ſuited to promote the intereſts of ſociety and government. How very impolitic then muſt it be to oppoſe it? or what public good can be expected to ariſe from this oppoſition? The goſpel deſerves every degree of countenance and protection from ſuperiors, all manner of reverence and ſubmiſſion from private perſons, as its views are ſo eminently the union and happineſs of both. And a proportionable increaſe of vice and miſchief has followed, and muſt ever follow, every neglect and contempt of it. Here a paſſage in the twelfth letter of the diſſertation on parties occurs to my memory. It will ſerve to illuſtrate the point we are upon. "Some men there are, the

" peſts of ſociety I think them, who pretend a
" great regard to religion in general, but who
" take every opportunity of declaiming pub-
" licly againſt that ſyſtem of religion, or
" at leaſt againſt that church eſtabliſhment,
" which is received in *Britain* . . . I am
" perſuaded, that [ſuch men] . . . have not
" yet prepared and agreed upon the plan of
" a new religion . . . We ſhould find our-
" ſelves then without any form of religion."

LET us now proceed to the third head, under which we ſhall find very high things ſaid *of human nature*, and indeed as much as can well be ſaid. Man is here declared to be an immaterial, ſpiritual, intelligent, reaſonable, moral agent; compounded of body and mind; the principal inhabitant of the earth; prepared for happineſs ſuitable to his nature; created with free-will to attain this, if he pleaſes; and made able to perform the duties of religion, the chief purpoſe of his deſtination . . . The direct conſequence of all this is, that he is an accountable creature, and liable to be rewarded, and puniſhed for his actions; and this, not only as a member of ſociety, and according to the laws of the country he happens to live in, but as a private perſon, and an individual,

dividual, according to the laws of God Almighty, which he is thus made capable of diſcovering and obeying ... It alſo, I think, clearly follows from the foregoing repreſentation, that this ſuperior happineſs, and higheſt deſtination, of man muſt have a view beyond this ſhort, frail, precarious, unſatisfactory, if not miſerable, life; that nothing here can adequately anſwer our talents and capacities; eſpecially as this writer expreſsly ſays, that "in thoſe infe- Vol. V.
"rior purpoſes, that regard animal life, p. 98.
"other creatures have by nature the ad-
"vantage over men."

Aſtoniſhing it is, that ſo fine a genius ſhould not ſee theſe plain conſequences of what he had owned. And yet we muſt think they eſcaped him. For it is but too certain, that he frequently ſets himſelf againſt them. Nay ſometimes he contradicts his own principles.

Our being a compound of material and Vol. I.
immaterial ſubſtance is denied. p. 20.

All ſpirits are declared hypothetical, ex- p. 102.
cept the infinite ſpirit.

The diſtinction of body and ſoul argued p. 198.
againſt.

p. 242. That there are ſpiritual natures, diſtinct from corporeal, we have no knowledge at all.

p. 269. All the phænomena from our birth to our death ſeem repugnant to the immateriality and immortality of the ſoul.

Vol. II. p. 146. There may be created minds or intelligences much ſuperior to ours, but not immaterial ſpiritual beings.

Vol. III. p. 133. Man's participating of the divine nature, and being made after the image of God, ridiculed as proceeding from the pride of man.

p. 135. It is madneſs and dreaming to ſuppoſe a ſoul in man.

Vol. IV. p. 316. Man the principal inhabitant of this planet. It will not follow, that it was made for his ſake, nor that infinite wiſdom had no other end of making him, than that of making an happy creature.

p. 393. While ſelf-love and ſocial are the ſame . . . every reaſonable man will confeſs, that ſuch a ſtate is as happy, not only as human eye ever ſaw, or human ear ever heard, but as the heart of man can conceive to belong to humanity.

Vol. V. p. 100. National virtue and national vice have always produced national happineſs and national

tional miſery in a due proportion, and are by conſequence the great ſanctions of the law of nature. Theſe ſanctions are ſufficient, *in terrorem*, to the collective bodies of men, and the puniſhment of individuals is left to the diſcipline of thoſe laws which every ſociety makes for its own ſake.

It is plain, by the whole courſe of God's providence, that he regards his human creatures collectively, not individually. p. 110.

Individuals are the objects of human juſtice; ſocieties of men of divine juſtice. p. 111.

TO theſe extracts others may be added, which will be produced, when we come to the head of future rewards and puniſhments. I beg now to make a few reflections on theſe before us.

Every one muſt ſee here a very different account of human nature from that which was before taken from this noble writer. Many important privileges, which were then granted, are here denied or explained away. Theſe contradictions appear impoſſible to be reconciled. We cannot then embrace all theſe opinions. And it is ſurely for the honor of our nature, which I know not why we ſhould ſtudy or deſire to renounce,

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nounce, as well as an act of gratitude to our Creator, to chuſe the former.

To mention only a few of the difficulties, which occur to me on comparing all theſe paſſages together. 1. If *the argument from our own intelligence to a Firſt intelligence be plain and obvious*, and if *the ſole criterion of immaterial ſpirit is our own ſpirit*; then how will it be poſſible to prove that God is a ſpirit, unleſs we grant at the ſame time, that there is ſomething ſpiritual within us? If motion cannot be produced by mere matter, much leſs can life, and thought, and reaſoning, willing, chooſing, determining, loving, hating, &c. Theſe cannot be the effects or properties of matter. Wherever they are found, they muſt proceed from ſome immaterial ſubſtance, and exiſt alſo in ſuch. We may not be able perfectly to explain or comprehend what this is. But to deny its ſpirituality on this account would be abſurd. We know there is, and muſt be, a difference no leſs than infinite between our own mind, nay between the moſt exalted created mind, and the Supreme Divine mind. But we cannot from hence gather, that there is no ſort of affinity or likeneſs between them, or that they are not only

only in degree, but in kind, altogether diſſimilar. Or, if this be really the caſe, I do not ſee, how the exiſtence of the one could be proved from the others. Theſe properties and affections, of which we are conſcious, and of which we ſee the effects, muſt ſubſiſt in ſome ſubject or other. Call this ſoul, or mind, or what you will, it muſt be different from, and ſuperior to matter. They cannot ſpring from mere matter or motion, being ſtill, *toto genere*, diſtinct and more excellent. If then you contend, that matter is capable of all this, the objection recurs, and is, I think unanſwerable, that the caſe might have been originally the ſame in the Deity; and then how will you from theſe effects demonſtrate an Immaterial cauſe? So that by denying yourſelf to be a ſpiritual being, you take away the very foundation of your argument, *the ſole criterion of ſpirit* in general. *

2. If

* Should it be here replied, that tho' thought is not an original property of matter, yet it may be ſuperadded to it by God; we may aſk, why, if this be ſo, they may not have been originally joined together in God himſelf. The objection then remains. If thought, &c. may become properties of matter, I ſee no reaſon why this might not always have been the ſubject of them. How then ſhall we prove God to be more than matter?

2. If *we have clear and determinate ideas of body by ſenſation, and of ſpirit by reflection*, and a *conſcious knowlege of the reciprocal action of body and mind*; which is granted, and is undeniable; then we muſt be *compounded of material and immaterial ſubſtance*... then there is a *diſtinction between ſoul and body*... then we may, nay muſt, *have* ſome *knowlege of ſpiritual natures diſtinct from corporeal*, and may *ſuppoſe a ſoul* without *madneſs and dreaming*.

3. Neither can *all the phænomena from our birth to our death* be *repugnant to* its *immateriality and immortality*. Some dependance indeed it has on the body, as it muſt receive its firſt ideas and impreſſions from ſenſe, and will frequently partake of the imperfections of this its companion. Yet how often do we ſee dulneſs and ſtrength in the ſame perſons? how often a fine genius and capacity, an excellent head and an excellent heart, exerting themſelves, when joined with a weak and diſtempered conſtitution? How often do they ſurvive

matter? which Lord Bolingbroke allows him to be, as indeed every one muſt, who is fit to be argued with. The conſequence then is, that we ourſelves are, in part, immaterial beings, as all our notions of immateriality are allowed to proceed from what we know and feel within ourſelves.

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the ruins of the body, if I may ſo ſpeak, and diſplay their peculiar powers in times of ſickneſs, nay when near the approach of their diſſolution from it?

4. It is, I think, impoſſible to conceive any difference between *minds* and *intelligences*, and *immaterial ſpiritual beings*; tho' the noble writer's ſcheme required him to diſtinguiſh between them, when he allowed, that there might be one, but not the other. If *intellect is above the mere powers of motion and figure*, it muſt be immaterial.

5. If *we are obliged to our Creator for a certain rule, and ſufficient means of arriving at happineſs*; then, I apprehend, it will follow, that the end of God's making him was to make him an happy creature, at leaſt a creature capable of happineſs. And indeed, what other end can we ſuppoſe of our creation?

Laſtly, if *man is a religious, as well as a ſocial creature*, and a free and moral agent; it appears to be undeniable, that there is a law of nature, antecedent to, and diſtinct from, the law of ſocieties; that the ſanctions of national happineſs and miſery are not the ſole ſanctions of the law of nature, if they are properly ſo at all; that theſe are

not

not ſufficient to make particular men religious and virtuous; and that individuals muſt be the objects of Divine Providence and Divine Juſtice. Whether there ever was any public ſtate completely happy according to his Lordſhip's deſcription, in one of theſe extracts, may be much queſtioned. Allow that there were. It muſt be granted, that ſome very good men may be very unhappy, and ſome very bad ones very proſperous, in it. The phyſical evils and inconveniences, to which the former ſtand expoſed, ſuch as loſs of health and friends, diſappointments and poverty, will hinder them from taking any great ſhare in the general happineſs. And if the puniſhment of individuals is left to human laws, yet the rewarding them can very ſeldom, and in few inſtances, be provided for by theſe. And yet rewards are as much ſanctions as puniſhments can be; and the equitable diſtribution of the one is as much a part of juſtice as that of the others ... On the other hand, neither can legal puniſhments be ſufficient. In many caſes the crime cannot be ſo aſcertained, as that the puniſhment will be certainly proportioned to the guilt. In many theſe will be evaded. The

hopes

hopes of being undiſcovered, which hopes will alſo ſometimes ſucceed, will defeat the good effect of them. And bad men, if they find their account at preſent in their corruption and iniquity, will look with great indifference on the public miſery they contribute to. So that ſome higher and more certain ſanctions of religion, and the law of nature, ſuch as muſt affect individuals in a nearer and cloſer manner, are ſtill wanted to enforce it. We ſee the neceſſity of ſome happineſs and miſery more proportioned to the right uſe, or abuſe, of the talents and faculties now granted us. And as the brutes have confeſſedly the advantage of us *with reſpect to animal life*; the benefits of ſocial life, were theſe all, would not make us full amends, nor anſwer the ſuperior dignity of our natures.

THE fourth head is a very comprehenſive one. It contains the great articles of *the Being, Perfections, and Providence of God, and our duty to Him.* Theſe are ſaid to be demonſtrable by our reaſon. So is His Nature. His unity, incomprehenſibility, the connection between His natural and moral attributes, His power, and wiſdom, and goodneſs, the particular chaſtiſements He ſometimes

ſometimes ſends, the eaſineſs of His operations, His all-perfection, ſelf-exiſtence, and intelligence, are largely granted. It is alſo here declared, that His will conſtitutes the obligation of duty; that we ought inwardly and ſincerely to worſhip and obey Him; that He is the Greateſt Object of our gratitude, reſignation, hope, and addreſſes; that our higheſt honor is to know and adore Him, to diſcover His will, and to promote our happineſs by obeying it; and that the Unity of the Firſt Cauſe was originally the Univerſal belief of mankind.

I am by no means deſirous to inſinuate, that this noble writer had any atheiſtical doubts about him of the exiſtence of The One True God, the Firſt Cauſe of all, of whom he ſpeaks in ſuch ſtrong terms of reverence and veneration. And I am concerned to give any paſſages, which may ſeem to interfere with what is here ſaid, but impartiailty requires me to produce the following ones.

Vol. I. p. 300. The unity of God was not the primitive faith of mankind. Revelations to the father, and to the reſtorer of the whole human race, might have eſtabliſhed this faith univerſally:

verſally: but without revelation it could not be that even of any one people, till obſervation and meditation, till a full and vigorous exerciſe of reaſon, made it ſuch.

God's continual operation on matter denied. Vol. II. p. 58.

The moral attributes of God, the general ſyſtem of his providence, as inſcrutable to man as to beaſts. p. 367.

Abſurd in the Jews to make God an actor immediately, and perſonally, as it were, in the creation, and in the government of the world. Vol. III. p. 114.

The diſtinction between God's phyſical and moral attributes, I do not ſee one religious purpoſe that it is neceſſary to anſwer. ..... tender and hearty concern for the happineſs of man ... ſtrange words to be applied to the Supreme Being. p. 411.

God's moral attributes, holineſs, goodneſs, juſtice, righteouſneſs, and truth, are not diſcerned in his works, as to be proper objects of our imitation. p. 412.

God has not eſtabliſhed particular providences for particular nations, much leſs for particular men, as far as we can diſcover by the help of reaſon and experience. Vol. IV. p. 171.

p. 175. Men are fond of acceſs to the Supreme Being. Nothing can flatter humanity ſo much.

p. 204. To know that an All-perfect Being exiſted by the neceſſity of his nature; and that his wiſdom and power are infinite, is repre-
Vol. V. ſented as knowing as much of God as na-
p. 76. tural religion requires.

p. 14. The phyſical and moral ſyſtems have no need, like the bungling works, and imperfect inſtitutions, of men, to be carried on by frequent interpoſitions and partial directions, that they may continue to anſwer the end of their Maker.

p. 28. The theiſt admits enough particular providences to break through and overturn the natural order and conſtitution of the phyſical and moral ſyſtem.

p. 83. Particular providences would be ſo many miracles in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word.

p. 99. God does not govern the world by particular providences, and it ſeems to be contrary to what infinite wiſdom has eſtabliſhed, that He ſhould.

p. 170. We muſt conceive God's juſtice and goodneſs bounded.

p. 302. Demonſtration alone, not even univerſal tradition, the ſole proof of the Being of God.

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The variety of the phænomena, which p. 318.
ſtruck their ſenſes, would lead the generality, moſt probably, to imagine a variety of cauſes; and more obſervations, and deeper reflections, than the firſt men could make, were neceſſary to prove the Unity of the Firſt Cauſe. That ſome made them, at leaſt very early, can ſcarce be doubted.

My reflections on this head are theſe.

1. THAT *the one true God muſt have been from the beginning known by all* ... and, that *the Unity of God was not the primitive faith of mankind*... are ſelf-contradictory propoſitions, and cannot both be true; tho' they are here both twice aſſerted. If we abide by the former, this writer allows, it muſt have originally come from revelation. If we hold the latter, the need of revelation to teach this firſt principle of religion to all, is clear. I ſay, to all. For tho' it be capable of being diſcovered by *obſervation and meditation*, and *a full and vigorous exerciſe of reaſon*; yet this muſt have been a work of ſome time, which all are not equal to; and yet all from the beginning were concerned to know, believe, and worſhip the One True God.

2. If *reaſon is ſufficient to demonſtrate God's attributes and Providence*, how is it, that his *moral attributes, and the general ſyſtem of his Providence* is ſaid to be *as inſcrutable to man as to beaſts?* If God is an All-perfect Being; ſurely holineſs, goodneſs, juſtice, righteouſneſs, and truth, are perfections, as much at leaſt ſo as power and wiſdom; which indeed without the others are not proper foundations for our *gratitude, reſignation, hope*, or *addreſſes*. None of theſe attributes can be comprehended by us; but they are all diſcoverable. We may both argue up to them, and down again from them all. It is owned to be *the higheſt abſurdity not to acknowlege the Divine Goodneſs in all his* works; and to be neceſſary to *believe, that* God *will not proceed with* any *in violation of that juſtice*, of which *he had made* us *able to acquire notions*. Is not this ſaying, that he acts juſtly, and is juſt and good; not in a *bounded* or limited manner, for this I cannot conceive; but as the All-perfect Fountain of theſe excellencies, *which he has conſtituted in the nature of things?* Can we aſcribe juſtice or goodneſs to him at all, and yet be no more able to ſearch out his moral

moral attributes, than the beaſts are? This ſeems to be confuſion all over.

Again, if *reaſon* be *ſufficient to demonſtrate* God's *Providence*, then neither is the *general ſyſtem* of this utterly *inſcrutable* to us. We may certainly learn the truth of it, tho' we ſhall never be able to comprehend it.

3. With regard to particular providences, Lord Bolingbroke ſpeaks very variouſly. He owns, that *the care of man has not been neglected by God*; I preſume, he meant, the care of every particular man; that *chaſtiſements ſhould teach mankind to adore and fear that Providence, which governs the world by particular as well as general diſpenſations*; that he does *not deny particular Providences*; and that this belief *keeps up a belief of prayer*; which may be *a very uſeful, and conſequently a very rational, expedient, to keep up a ſenſe of our dependence on God*... On the contrary, he charges the *Jews* with *abſurdity* in *making God an actor immediately, and perſonally, as it were, in the creation and government of the world* (words, which I own I do not underſtand, and ſhould be very unwilling to underſtand in their worſt ſenſe...) He aſſerts, that *God has not eſtabliſhed particular Provi-*

dences for particular nations, much leſs for particular men . . . he inſinuates, that to ſuppoſe *frequent interpoſitions* would be to think *the phyſical and moral ſyſtems like the bungling works and imperfect inſtitutions of men* . . . that *particular Providences overturn the natural order of things; would be ſtrictly ſo many miracles*, and *ſeem contrary to what Infinite Wiſdom has eſtabliſhed*.

In ſhort, this great man does not ſeem to have thought clearly on this ſubject; and I cannot but ſuſpect, that he had ſome other notion of particular providences in his head, than what the world has hitherto underſtood by this expreſſion; viz. a care of, and regard to, not only the courſe of nature in general, but each man in particular; not indeed rewarding or puniſhing him immediately for his good and ill actions, tho' this may ſometimes be done, but protecting, defending, aſſiſting, and bleſſing him. This is the ſole and ſure ground of all dependence, worſhip, and duty to him, and of all comfort and ſteadineſs within ourſelves. And if any thing elſe be meant, the expreſſion is unguarded and miſapplied. But if this be meant, all that is ſaid above, and in his Lordſhip's whole book againſt it, is

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mere declamation... There can be no difficulty in determining between theſe two accounts. The one is clear and cogent: The other is all over obſcure and intricate.

We cannot indeed hope to explain the manner, how the Supreme Being acts; or anſwer all the numberleſs queſtions which may be aſked on this ſubject by vain and idle perſons. Second cauſes undoubtedly are uſed. But theſe ſhould not exclude, ſhould not fail to lead our thoughts up to the firſt. The Infinite Perfection of God's ways and works above ours, and our incapacity to *meaſure* them, is obſerved by his Lordſhip.

4. There are a few errors more, couched in the extracts immediately foregoing, which it may be proper juſt to point out, and which may not be directly reducible to any of the particulars mentioned... This author thinks, *tender and hearty concern for the happineſs of men, ſtrange words to be applied to the Supreme Being.* It is ſtrange to me, that any exception ſhould be taken againſt them. They mean no more than very great pity, affection, and deſire of our good. We do not intend by this to aſcribe paſſions to God. We do not pretend to

expreſs or conceive how any of his attributes belong to him. But the effects of his love and goodneſs we daily ſee and feel. We have no way to declare our ſenſe of this, but by terms very inadequate, and borrowed from our ſentiments and dealings with each other. And if we knew any that were ſtill ſtronger, they would be ſtill more ſtrictly applicable ... *Men are* ſaid to be *fond of acceſs to the Supreme Being. Nothing flatters humanity ſo much.* I hope this is not a ſneer, tho' I fear it looks like one. Prayer is certainly one of the higheſt privileges, as well as one of the greateſt comforts, which belong to us; and it were to be wiſhed, that men were much more ſenſible of it, than they are. There would be more virtue, and more happineſs, in the world, than we find at preſent. But indeed, the generality are too backward to this duty ... *Natural religion*, with regard to God, is much contracted and narrowed, when it is made to conſiſt only in the *knowlege of an All-perfect ſelf-exiſtent Creator of infinite power and wiſdom*—I cannot aſſent to the noble author, when he aſſerts, that *demonſtration alone, not even univerſal tradition*, is *the ſole proof of the being of God.* I ſhould be ſorry to build

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on arguments which are not ſtrictly concluſive. Nor indeed in the preſent caſe can there be any occaſion to produce theſe, as this great truth is capable of ſuch as are unanſwerable. But neither can I ſee any reaſon to diſcard any proof of it, which will bear examination. As different ways of reaſoning may be adapted to different perſons; ſo univerſal tradition may touch and affect ſome, whom demonſtration could not. In a word, tradition, when it is as early and as univerſal, as it is in the matter before us, muſt be ſatisfactory to every fair enquirer. There is no way of accounting for it, but by ſuppoſing it to be founded in reaſon and truth. "Omnium conſenſus naturæ vox." This will receive confirmation from what this author himſelf has told us, Vol. II. p. 227. "Opinions fluctuate perpetually: "when one of them alone can be true, a "thouſand, that ſtand in direct oppoſi- "tion to one another, are entertained. "While they laſt, they are unſteady; time "and experience explode them often: and "when they return into uſe again, they are "ſeldom exactly the ſame. Principles of "real knowlege are fixed and uniform: "time and experience confirm them.

"They

" They cannot be exploded; they may be " unknown, or they may be forgot, but " when perceived, are perceived by every " mind alike." The immediate conſequence from hence is, that univerſal concurrence in belief among all nations of the world, ſuch as there is for the Being of God, which never was *unknown* and much leſs *exploded*, muſt have a juſt weight and influence on the mind, and be conſidered as a *principle of real knowlege*.

HEAD the fifth. This relates to that great article of all religion, *future rewards and puniſhments*. The poſſibility and the wiſdom of this to enforce morality and piety is owned. *Secret thoughts* are ſaid to be *thus affected*. *Eternal puniſhments* are allowed to be the *ſanction of religion*. There may be, I preſume hereafter, *a manner of knowing, which we cannot now conceive*. A future ſtate was *eſtabliſhed long before we have any light into antiquity*; *owing to a natural deſire of exiſtence*; *could not fail to encourage virtue, and reſtrain vice*; *reſts on the authority of revelation*; *reaſon can have no objection againſt it*. *No doctrines were more inculcated*. *We wiſh to be immortal*. The contrary is very *uncomfortable*. *Capital puniſhments* are not inflicted

inflicted to *reform offenders*. The greateſt *terrors of puniſhment* owned to be ſometimes neceſſary.

The purport of all theſe conceſſions is, that this doctrine is natural, uſeful, deſirable, unexceptionable, and therefore true. This is the concluſion, which I think may, and ought to be drawn. Revelation confirms here the deſires of nature, and the dictates of reaſon. Let us now ſee, what the noble writer has in other places advanced, which may affect ſo early, ſo general, and ſo neceſſary an opinion.

The ancient lawgivers not much in earneſt about a doctrine, which they were extremely ſolicitous to inculcate, of future rewards and puniſhments. Vol. I. p. 307.

This is a proper political expedient. p. 308.

The belief of future rewards and puniſhments was owing to the pride of the human heart. . . . A part of artificial theology. Vol. IV. p. 206. p. 211.

To be taught to fear an angry God is mentioned as an error. p. 217.

The diſpenſations of Providence, in the diſtributions of good and evil, ſtand in no need of any hypotheſis to juſtify them; and if they did, that of a future ſtate of p. 311.

rewards

rewards and puniſhments would be inſufficient.

p. 348. A future ſtate cannot be demonſtrated by reaſon; it is not in the nature of it capable of demonſtration, and no one ever returned that irremeable way, to give us an aſſurance of the fact. It was therefore originally an hy-

Vol. IV. p. 214. potheſis; and it may then be a vulgar error.

p. 351. If they admitted a future ſtate, they, *Tully* in particular, laughed at the old women's tales of hell and the furies.

p. 354. God ſuppoſed thus to correct his firſt plan.

p. 378. In vain will they endeavour to perſuade, that the conditions of humanity are imperfections in the ſyſtem; and that in the works of God, as in thoſe of men, whatever falls ſhort of the idea of the workman, or is not proportioned to the value of the materials he prepares in one eſſay, may be rectified in another inſtance.

p. 385. The ſeeming imperfection (even moral) of the parts, neceſſary to the real perfection of the whole.

p. 397. That we ſhould return to the earth from whence we came, to the dirt under our feet, does not ſeem any indignity offered to our nature, ſince it is common to all the animal

animal kind: and he, who complains of it as ſuch, does not ſeem to have been ſet, by his reaſoning faculties, ſo far above them in life, as to deſerve not to be levelled with them at death.

If Chriſtians do not aſſume, that health and the advantages of fortune conſtitute happineſs ſolely, they aſſume that it is conſtituted principally by theſe; ſince on the want, which good men have ſometimes of theſe, they accuſe God of injuſtice. They pretend to keep an account between God and man, &c. Vol. V. p. 13.

Eternal torments inconſiſtent with any notions of juſtice. p. 139.

Future rewards and puniſhments cannot be ſanctions of the law of nature, becauſe not known to the old world, nor to Moſes. p. 151.

When and wherever known, it was plainly of human, not of Divine, authority. p. 153.

.... puniſhed to no end at all, when this ſyſtem was at an end, with inconceivable and eternal torments. p. 157.

Moſes did not believe the immortality of the ſoul, nor the rewards and puniſhments of another life ... he taught neither. p. 355.

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THUS this great man thought proper to talk againſt an article, which he cannot but own to be agreeable to nature, ſerviceable to virtue, and uſeful to ſociety; and the firm belief of which has been to good men their great ſupport and comfort in this ſcene of uncertainty, temptation, and trial. He can here calmly mention the being *levelled with the brutes at death*, as *no indignity to our nature*; tho' in other places he pleads for our being far raiſed above them, and born to higher things than they. 'Tis hard to imagine, that any one can write or read this, without ſome generous indignation. Nor can we believe it, without offering violence to ourſelves; and forgetting, if not ſuppreſſing, our inextinguiſhable deſires of exiſtence; our ardent and noble aſpirings after truth and happineſs, which cannot be anſwered here; and our being endued with reaſon, and liberty, and natural conſcience; all which evidently look forwards towards another ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, much more univerſal and exact, than any appear in this life. All which ſhews this doctrine to be more than a *political expedient*, or human invention, and that it is, if I may ſo ſay, rooted in the heart

heart itſelf; and if it was *owing to pride*, this pride is natural and laudable, which ought never to be checked, but always to be encouraged, as leading to all manner of wiſe and good actions.

2. It is ſurpriſing to find Lord Bolingbroke aſſerting, that *the ancient law-givers were not much in earneſt about a doctrine, which* he owns *they were extremely ſolicitous to inculcate.* Could they ſhew their ſincerity more ſtrongly than by this ſolicitude? How then can this point be made out?

3. If we can judge at all from the relations and fitneſſes of things, we muſt conclude that ſinners are liable to puniſhment; and in ſome caſes, juſtice may even require them to be puniſhed. In all ſuch, a diſpleaſure or anger againſt ſin muſt be ſuppoſed, which at the ſame time needs not be confounded with rage, or fury, or deſire of vengeance againſt the offender. Sometimes this anger may be neceſſary to *reform himſelf:* ſometimes to *diſcourage others:* ſometimes to *cut off hurtful members of ſociety.* Theſe ends of puniſhment the noble author allows. And how then could he mention it, as *an error, to fear an angry God?* When the Divine Being ſees any wickedneſs, he muſt

muſt ſee it with diſpleaſure. We attribute this to him, as we aſcribe love, or joy, or any other of the affections; removing all degree of weakneſs and imperfection, and making uſe of the beſt ideas and ways of ſpeaking, which we have or can have, not pretending they are ſtrictly equal and juſt.

Vol. V. p. 168. I know this writer declares againſt *knowing the divine attributes by analogy*, as *not knowing them at all.* But ſomething of this kind muſt here take place, or we muſt leave off to ſpeak or think of God at all; ſince we can no more reflect upon him, than ſee him, *as he is*; and ſince all our ideas muſt be borrowed from what we ſee, or are conſcious of. If then our fear is given us to any purpoſe, it muſt riſe in proportion to the danger we are in; and this in proportion to the power we offend and provoke. To dread then the anger of an Almighty Governor of the world, and to endeavour to reconcile him to ourſelves, is in the higheſt degree neceſſary. It is natural, rational, and really a virtue in us. And tho' it may ſometimes have led the way to ſuperſtition; yet the want of it argues what is worſe, either abſolute unbelief, or inexcuſeable raſhneſs and ſtupidity.

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This muſt ſuppoſe, either that God takes no notice at all of our wilful violations of his holy laws, or regards them with indifference, or that we may be reaſonably unconcerned at his threatened and impending puniſhments. All which is abſurd, and quite inconſiſtent with what his Lordſhip has allowed above.

4. With regard to external puniſhments, the caſe is ſomewhat different. This point muſt reſt on the authority of the goſpel. Our author owns, that they *are the ſanction of religion.* And if ſo, I would hope, they are not *inconſiſtent with any notions of juſtice.* At leaſt we have here no argument to prove them ſo; and the diſpute reſts where it did. He has precluded himſelf from one argument taken from reformations being the ſole end of puniſhment, by aſſigning two other reaſons of ſuch as are extreme; either or both of which may, for ought we know, prevail in the diſpenſation here objected againſt. The eternal puniſhment of wicked men, far from being *to no end at all,* may be a ſtanding perpetual terror to other creatures. And the ſociety of the good and faithful may be thus preſerved unmixed and unmoleſted.

5. The mixture of the good and evil, which is ſeen and felt in the world, has been always lamented; and from hence an argument has been drawn for another ſtate of things, where preſent diſorders will be rectified and ſettled. This the noble author very largely declaims againſt. He denies both the principle and the concluſion. He conſiders the repreſentation as charging God impiouſly with want of juſtice and goodneſs: And he contends, that a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments would be inſufficient to ſolve the difficulty, and juſtify the ſuppoſed wrong diſtributions of good and evil... As I am not writing a profeſſed anſwer to theſe works, I ſhall not pretend to conſider the ſeveral parts of this reaſoning fully and particularly. A very few ſtrictures will be ſufficient to my purpoſe.

That there are inequalities in the Divine diſpenſations here, is as clear as poſſible. Experience of all ages has ſhewn this in the ſtrongeſt light. When virtue is perſecuted, and vice triumphant, can we think this ſtate of things quite equal, or deſigned by a Juſt and Good God for the only or final one? Allow this world to be a place of trial and probation, in order to another, here will be

be a ſufficient foundation and call for reſignation and duty, and a ſufficient vindication of all the divine attributes. But on any other ſuppoſition, good men will have frequently little encouragement to continue in their integrity, and wicked men an inſufficient check to their wickedneſs. The former may be conceived to ſuffer undeſervedly, and in the moſt eſſential reſpects, from the latter; and they may alſo ſuffer in their health and fortunes from other accidents, much more than the latter do. Were this our only ſtate, it cannot be ſuppoſed, that God would have ordered things thus.

By arguing in this manner, we do not *aſſume*, as we are ſaid to do, *that health and fortune conſtitute happineſs principally*, nor do we *accuſe God of injuſtice*. We only plead, that good men muſt be deſigned by a Good God to be the happieſt; that under a total want of health and fortune they cannot be ſo; that ſickneſs, pain, and miſery, will make them otherwiſe, and, if they have no future happineſs in view, will damp every proſpect and expectation which can riſe in their minds, and make them envy the happier lot of the wicked, when theſe labour under no ſuch diſadvantages. Allow, that

theſe too are upon the whole far from being happy. Yet ſo far as health and fortune are neceſſary to happineſs, they are on the ſuppoſition the happier of the two. And as to the inward poſture and frame of their minds, if we exclude the hopes and fears of future rewards and puniſhments, they will be both in this reſpect, I will not ſay exactly on a level, but, far more equal in their enjoyments than they are, if we admit thoſe hopes and fears. And as this frame of their minds will be moſt commonly a ſecret, known to themſelves only, it cannot be ſuppoſed to reſtrain others from any bad actions, or to incite them to good ones. Whereas eaſe, and plenty, and ſplendor will attract the eyes of men, and prove much ſtronger motives. And thus the moral government of God would appear defective; and his regard to the intereſts and credit of religion and virtue, as well to the good of thoſe who follow them, would want to be cleared up and juſtified.

A future ſtate therefore muſt follow from the preſent diſpenſation of things. Nor is this to accuſe Heaven of injuſtice, but in reality to anſwer this charge of Atheiſm, and to account for the ſeeming inequalities of Providence:

vidence: as undoubtedly it will. For if there be a future ſtate, wherein full and final juſtice will be done to every one, then religion would be ſufficiently ſupported, and impiety diſcouraged; good men amply rewarded for their faith and patience, and the incorrigible left to ſuffer the deſerved conſequences of their folly and obſtinacy. Then the whole plan of Providence will appear to be One, Great, and Glorious... A ſhort ſtate of trial preparatory to an endleſs ſtate of rewards and puniſhments; the calling men to judgment purſuant to the grants of reaſon, liberty, and choice; and dealing with them, as this author once owns we may *piouſly believe*, " even with ſome regard to the uſe, they have made of their freewill here." Vol. V. p. 121.

So that thoſe accuſations of our *ſuppoſing God to correct his firſt plan*, or *rectify his own works* afterwards, are grounded on miſtake, and can here have no place at all. Indeed I cannot ſee, how *the conditions of humanity* can be other than *imperfections in the ſyſtem*, if under theſe conditions we include all our vices, with all the evils following them; though the one are barely permitted by God, and the others in the courſe and

order of things appointed to ſucceed. Theſe ſurely are imperfections in the ſyſtem, as it is at preſent, though not as it was originally formed. ... And ſtill leſs can I agree, that any *moral imperfection of the parts* is *neceſſary to the real perfection of the whole*. Our ſins are all ſtrictly chargeable on ourſelves, and not on our Maker. We have abuſed our talents, debaſed our nature, and thereby introduced much diſorder and confuſion into the world. But how can this be ſaid to conduce to the perfection of the whole? If it be meant, that this perfection required, that there ſhould be creatures of every rank and condition; ſurely we cannot think it neceſſary to this end, that ſome creatures ſhould be actually immoral or ſinful; becauſe this would be impiouſly to charge our vices on the Holy Author of our Being, and to make theſe neceſſary parts of our conſtitution.

Before I diſmiſs this head, I would juſt take notice of what this author affirms, that *Moſes did not believe the immortality of the ſoul, nor future rewards and puniſhments*, becauſe *he taught neither*. It may here be juſtly ſaid, that neither the premiſe, nor the concluſion is true. That our Lord

collected

collected this doctrine in part from the books of Moſes, cannot be doubted. Nor has his inference ever, that I know, been denied. That the noble author allows of Chriſt's authority, will appear hereafter. We muſt therefore imagine, that this paſſage of the genuine goſpels eſcaped his memory, when he wrote this ... It is true, that the doctrine is not expreſsly mentioned, as the ſanction of the Moſaical law. The reaſon of this I ſhall not pretend to be poſitive in. What firſt occurs is, that the law being given to a ſociety of men, might properly be content with temporal ſanctions; and that private perſons might have been left either to the concluſions of their own reaſon, or, in thoſe early times, to tradition, for a firm perſuaſion of the others ... However, it will not follow from the bare ſilence of Moſes, that he was ignorant of theſe. This is owned to have been an Egyptian doctrine before his time. Moſt probably therefore he was acquainted with it. But ſuppoſe him ignorant, neither can we collect from hence, that this *cannot be the ſanction of the law of nature.* Nor will this neceſſarily follow, though we ſhould grant the doctrine to be *not known to the old world.* But

this we need not. Indeed of the faith and opinions of the patriarchs, we have very ſhort accounts. From none of theſe however can it be collected, that they were unacquainted with the doctrine. Rather from ſome of them we have very ſtrong proof of the contrary. And what the author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews ſays of Abraham, &c. is very probable, and indeed convincing, that they acted with a view to another life . . . That *no one has returned* from the grave, is an objection which I am ſurprized to find coming from this writer. The goſpels, which he allows, ſhew the contrary. Not but, ſhould we grant the fact, what would follow? Is this ſort of proof neceſſary, after ſo many ſufficient proofs have been vouchſafed? No true Theiſt, I think, can ſay ſo.

THE review of the ſixth head will detain us very little. It allows, the moſt early diſtinction between *good and evil demons*, and the exiſtence of *ſome intellectual creatures vaſtly ſuperior to ourſelves*. The Scripture notion therefore of angels and devils, one would imagine, would meet with his Lordſhip's concurrence. The principles here laid down make the accounts of theſe beings, which

which revelation gives us, eaſy to be received. That evil demons ſhould deſire and endeavour to do miſchief, ſhould have power, and be ſometimes permitted to do it, or not always reſtrained from it, is but ſuitable to their nature, and not hard to be believed: much leſs is it, that good Demons ſhould be happily employed in acts of worſhip and obedience to their Creator, and in miniſtering to us.

And yet it is certain, that his Lordſhip often very inconſiſtently talks againſt the Scripture accounts of both theſe.

He ſpeaks againſt the *diabolical poſſeſſions*; though they are recorded in the goſpels, and on the ſuppoſitions allowed, there is no difficulty in accounting for them. Vol. I. p. 150.

..... Abſurd to ſuppoſe, that a God ſoverainly good, and at the ſame time Almighty and All-wiſe, ſuffers an inferior dependent being to deface his work in any ſort, and to make his other creatures both criminal and miſerable . . . to abuſe the reſt without controul, and to draw them into crimes and revolts, for which he puniſhes them afterwards, is the moſt injurious accuſation that can be brought. Vol. II. p. 30. p. 31.

Revelation

p. 149. Revelation ſuppoſed capable of realizing and ſanctifying wild imaginations about angels, &c.

Vol.IV. The goodneſs, and even the wiſdom of
p. 310. God lye juſt as much expoſed for ſuffering an inferior being, his creature, and a creature in actual rebellion, to baffle the deſigns it is aſſumed that he had, as they would lye, if theſe deſigns were acknowleged to have been imperfecty executed by him.

p. 334. Superior natures muſt be affected in ſome degree or other by moral evil, ſince moral evil is the conſequence of error, as well as of diſorderly appetites and paſſions, and ſince error is the conſequence of imperfect underſtanding. Leſs of this evil may prevail among them.

Vol. V. Superior intelligent beings may be placed
p. 89. in other planets.

p. 90. Yet the notion of angels in heaven, demons, or genii, is aſſumed.

p. 114. The nobleſt creatures muſt be liable to ſome inconveniencies at leaſt, both phyſical and moral.

NOW firſt, Can it be more *abſurd* and *injurious*, more *contrary to the goodneſs and wiſdom of God*, to ſuffer the devil to tempt and

and deceive men to their ruin, than to ſuffer wicked men to do the ſame by each other? And can this be denied? Or, is the Supreme Being ſubject to any imputations on this account? No more ſurely he ought to be on the other. He has given us reaſon and liberty to know and obey his law. Sufficient motives and ſanctions are ſet before us, to lead us to obedience, and to deter us from ſin. If there were no temptations, there could be no trial of our ſincerity, and little or no virtue. If we will uſe our talents rightly, we need not fear the ſubtlety or power of our enemies. They were never let looſe againſt us *without* ſome *controul*. Neither are we without divine aid and aſſiſtance. If we yield to their devices, it muſt be our own fault, and we are juſtly liable to be puniſhed afterwards for it. Should this be called *defacing God's work*, which it may indeed in ſome meaſure; yet it ought not to be called *baffling his deſigns*; ſince his deſign was to make probationary creatures happy, on the ſuppoſition and condition of their obedience; and this deſign is wiſe and good, and cannot be baffled by all the powers of hell.... It is mentioned, that the devil is *a creature in actual rebellion*, and therefore

fore leſs likely to be *ſuffered* to betray us. But if he were not ſo, what inclination or will could he have to do it? No fear of our ſuffering from any of the faithful ſervants of God.

2. I cannot conceive, why the notion of angels in heaven ſhould be more liable to exception, than *ſuperior intelligent beings in other planets*. Good demons, I apprehend, are no other than good angels. And if the word *Genii* conveys any ſuperſtitious meaning, it may be ſet aſide, being not a ſcripture word. The only queſtion is, whether it be not probable, that the ſuperior heaven, where God dwells in all the brightneſs of glory and majeſty, has its intelligent inhabitants, as well as this earth, or any other planet? With regard to the other planets, whatever we may conceive to be poſſible, we have not equal probability of their being inhabited, as with regard to the heaven. And whoever pretends to believe the goſpels, muſt admit this laſt point as fully made known therein.

3. That the very higheſt angels (for why ſhould there not be a gradation among them?) are the creatures of God Almighty, is certain: they muſt therefore fall infinitely

ſhort of Infinite Perfection. But we have no room to ſuppoſe them ſubject to *phyſical or moral evil. Diſorderly appetites and paſſions* they have none. They may be, and we are taught that they are, ſecure from error and ſin, though their *underſtanding* is *imperfect*, and the whole circle of things knowable be out of their reach. What they are buſied about, they may know truly.

THE want, and expediency, and authority, of a revelation, are the points which conſtitute the ſeventh head. Here, *inſpiration* is allowed to be *not inconceivable*. Several moſt important doctrines are ſaid to *reſt on the authority of revelation*. A revelation *authentic, conſiſtent* with itſelf and with natural religion, to be *received*, and *believed implicitly*. Its *authority enforces morality*. The *beſt philoſophers unintelligible and inconſiſtent. The law of nature not univerſally known*. We may err in our enquiries. *Expiatory ſacrifices ancient and univerſal. Plato declared the want of a Divine revelation. The heathen philoſophers could not reform mankind. Reaſon delivers men to revelation. A future ſtate, and the immortality of the ſoul*, to be *believed implicitly*, becauſe revealed. *Some Theiſts rather*

rather hoped than believed this. No perfect Virtue here.

SUCH are the contents of these extracts: And surely they deserve well to be attended to. The consequence must be an humble opinion of ourselves, and a thankfulness to our Creator for granting a revelation, which appears so very needful, not only to teach our duty, but to confirm and enforce it; and farther, to dispel those doubts and fears, which our imperfections and sins would make us liable to.

According to the method proposed, we are now to bring together some passages of a very different, nay contrary tendency.

Vol. I. p. 140. Christian inspiration is much misrepresented, and largely abused. Vol. II. See p. 155.

p. 140. Can he be less than mad, who boasts a revelation superadded to reason, to supply the defects of it, and who superadds reason to revelation to supply the defects of this too at the same time?

p. 160.

Mr. Locke affirms very untruly, that clear knowlege of duty was wanting to mankind before the coming of Christ.

p. 256.

Reason is able to propagate the knowlege of natural religion . . . But men have imagined,

imagined, that they have found in the frailty of human nature, an apparent neceſſity of going farther, &c. ... The religion of nature tells us nothing, which our reaſon is unable to comprehend. p. 257.

Jarring between civil and religious government cannot be prevented, unleſs the entire power of both remain in the ſame hands, which may be done in natural religion, but not when revealed ones are eſtabliſhed. Vol. III. p. 46.

A religion given by God is in its own nature invariable. Vol. III. p. 56.

All men able alike to diſcover the law of nature ... All men do not diſcover it indeed alike, though all men, even the moſt ſavage and ignorant, have, as I believe, ſome imperfect notions of it. p. 384.

The primeval law of nature is that code, wherein all the laws, to which God has ſubjected his human creatures, are contained ... this immutable. p. 406.

Natural religion a perpetual ſtanding revelation. Vol. IV. p. 24.

The law of nature is plain and proportioned to the meaneſt underſtanding. p. 26.

There is no one moral virtue, which has not been taught, explained, and proved, p. 165.

by the heathen philoſophers, both occaſionally and purpoſely.

p. 178. Plato's inſinuations of the neceſſity of a Divine Revelation no proof that neceſſary knowlege was wanting.

p. 181. In natural theology, and in morality, the knowlege of the philoſophers was not deficient.

p. 182. No doubt the philoſophers diſcovered the whole truth and the whole ſecret of divine religion.

p. 275. To affirm, that natural and revealed religion are alike unknown in any parts of the world, is to affirm an untruth.

Vol. V. p. 190. From the immutability of natural religion, it follows probably, that God has made no other revelation of himſelf and of his will to mankind.

LET me now be indulged in offering ſuch reflections as ariſe, on comparing theſe paſſages together.

1. I can ſee nothing, which in the leaſt approaches towards deſerving ſo harſh a cenſure as that of *madneſs*, in ſuppoſing *reaſon and revelation*, which are owned to be *the two nobleſt gifts of God to man*, joined and added to each other, to ſupply the defects

ſects, to which they might both be otherwiſe ſubject. When conſidered in their connection, they conſtitute the moſt certain criterion of truth, and the fulleſt rule of duty. To divide or part them, is to expoſe ourſelves either to doubt and uncertainty, or to ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm. In ſhort, they explain, aſcertain, and fulfil each other. Revelation may add not only its *authority to enforce* the laws of reaſon, but ſome doctrines and duties, which this could not diſcover. And reaſon, in her turn, may not only ſee the fitneſs of theſe doctrines and duties, but judge aright concerning the truth and meaning of the revelation, and apply in particular caſes and inſtances ſuch rules as are here left in general. Beſides, we may ſuppoſe a revelation given to add ſome particular injunction only; which yet muſt leave whatever reaſon before taught in full force; this therefore not being ſuperſeded, may in the ſtricteſt ſenſe be ſaid to ſupply the defects of the other ... And thus may theſe lend their mutual light and aſſiſtance, and enable each other effectually to anſwer their reſpective purpoſes: which, if they could not do, they would be ſo far defective.

2. If Lord Bolingbroke's account of the ancient philoſophers be true, as it is, that the *beſt* of them were *often unintelligible, inconſiſtent, and contradictory* ... if *the law of nature is not univerſally known* ... if *reaſon is not given to all alike* .... if *in natural theology the knowlege of the philoſophers was confined to a very few general propoſitions* ... if *a future ſtate and the immortality of the ſoul were diſcovered by revelation* ... then it ſhould ſeem, that *clear knowlege of duty* muſt have been *wanting to mankind before the coming of Chriſt*; as before this, the common people could neither attain to it by any enquiries of their own, nor could their philoſophers ſufficiently inſtruct them ... then, *all* are not *able alike to diſcover the law of nature*. In ſhort, all that follows about the clearneſs and ſufficiency of this law, and of the extenſive knowlege of the philoſophers, cannot be true; and indeed it is contrary to fact, as well as to the repreſentation before made.

3. Suppoſing reaſon capable of diſcovering natural religion in all it's branches, it is ſtill incapable of propagating it. *The weak and ignorant*, according to the noble author's account, *have* only *ſome imperfect notions of it.*

it: and *the heathen philſophers* he allows *had not ſufficient means of reforming mankind.* A true revelation is alſo owned to be the *moſt proper to enforce morality and natural religion*; it was *given* to do this *by a ſuperior authority*, which cannot be pretended to by any man to whom it has not been given. So that we have here another very conſiderable conceſſion, in favour of the uſefulneſs and need of revelation.

4. *Men have imagined, that they have found in the frailty of human nature an apparent neceſſity of going further*, &c. I ſuppoſe his Lordſhip means, of accepting a revelation, that makes thoſe proviſions againſt this frailty, which natural religion does not. If this be all, ſurely they are no way to be blamed. It would be both ingrateful and injurious to act otherwiſe. For can it be denied, that our nature is weak and frail? However this came originally, is the fact diſputable? And when any help of any ſort is wanted, ſhould we not be pleaſed to find it reached out to us, and thankfully receive it? If *no perfect virtue* is *to be found among the ſons of men*, if we are all offenders againſt the law of nature; do we not evidently need aſſiſtance to ſtrengthen us, as well as

ſome ſure method of atonement and reconciliation, more than this law contains or teaches? By this all ſinners are condemned. Is there not then *an apparent neceſſity of going farther*, if we have any farther offers or promiſes, light or encouragement? Are not theſe moſt expedient and deſireable to perſons in our ſituation? And do not the *expiatory ſacrifices* of the heathen world, acknowleged to be *moſt ancient and univerſal*, and relied upon for this very end, ſhew this to have been the general ſenſe of mankind? Suppoſe theſe to have been at firſt invented by men, though in all probability they were of Divine inſtitution; ſtill they would never have been thought of, at leaſt they could not have acquired ſuch univerſal veneration, if the conſciouſneſs of human frailty and guilt had not led men to look beyond themſelves for help and comfort.

5. The next error, which requires a remark, is, that *the religion of nature tells us nothing, which our reaſon is unable to comprehend.* I ſtand amazed. And is not God then part of what this religion tells us? And is not he incomprehenſible in his nature, his attributes, his providence, his works, and all his ways? *How ſhould finite meaſure infinite,*

is

is his Lordſhip's own queſtion, and is irreconcileable with what is here advanced. So that a true theiſt muſt admit myſteries in general, which his own ſyſtem contains.

6. It is no conſequence of the *eſtabliſhment of revealed religion*, that *civil and religious government ſhould neceſſarily jar*. If either of theſe arbitrarily aſſume powers, which do not belong to them, whether the religion be natural or revealed, this contention may be expected to follow ſuch encroachment. But while both will keep within their proper ſpheres, both will be helpful and ſerviceable to each other, and promote the good and happineſs of the whole. Revealed religion contributes to this, more than natural; and more when it is eſtabliſhed, than when it is not. This is our preſent caſe at preſent, for which we cannot be too thankful.

7. I ſhall not reſume the debate about the *immutability of the Divine law*, or of the law of nature; which is ſo accurately ſtated, and ſo judiciouſly ſettled, by the preſent Biſhop of Briſtol. But how it is ſo much as *probable* from hence, *that God has made no other revelation of himſelf and of his will to mankind*, I cannot perceive. Admit that

the truths and laws of reaſon are quite invariable, and that their obligation never ceaſes or changes; yet may not another manifeſtation of the Divine will be granted to explain and teach them to the ignorant, and to perſons of mean capacities; who, though unable to diſcover them, may be greatly intereſted in them? May not a revelation ſtrengthen and enforce the obſervance of them by powerful ſanctions, and *by a ſuperior authority?* His Lordſhip has owned, that it *was* actually *given* for this purpoſe, and that *nothing* can *ſeem ſo proper*. Here therefore he plainly oppoſes himſelf. Nay, unleſs the nature and circumſtances of men were always to continue the ſame, which certainly they do not, the religion of nature, however invariable, may become inſufficient alone; and new relations, fitneſſes, and duties may very wiſely and properly be diſcovered, and ſuperadded to it by the authority of God, which will then be equally binding upon the conſcience, and neceſſary to ſecure our comfort and welfare. This alſo the noble author admits to be poſſible, as appears under the thirteenth head. How then could he draw the concluſion we are here arguing againſt? ... Nay, if there be probably no other

other revelation but what he calls the ſtanding one of nature, how could he ſpeak of *natural reaſon, and ſupernatural revelation*, as *the two nobleſt gifts of God to man?* This and many other paſſages above extracted, muſt ſuppoſe this laſt to be ſo far from an improbable thing, as to have actually been vouchſafed. Or, elſe we muſt ſay, there is neither truth nor meaning in them.

8. We have ſeen, how Lord Bolingbroke acknowleges, that *Plato inſinuates in many places, the want or the neceſſity of a Divine revelation to diſcover* many truths of the laſt importance, which are there mentioned. This the friends of revelation have juſtly laid great ſtreſs upon. For if ſo great a man felt and owned the weakneſs of human reaſon, or his own, which was ſcarce inferior to any, in theſe particulars; ſurely it muſt be great folly and vanity to boaſt of its ſufficiency and perfection. It may not be always eaſy, now it is aſſiſted by revelation, to ſay how far it could go alone. But when it had no ſuch aſſiſtance, and is thus heard to complain for the want of it, we may be aſſured of its defects. This philoſopher, I know, frequently undergoes the ſevere laſh of our noble writer. And

yet Vol. II. p. 379, it is confeſſed, that " not only the notions of *Plato* and *Sacrates* " concerning divine worſhip, but concern- " ing the exiſtence of the Supreme Being, " were much more conformable to right " reaſon, than any of thoſe which pre- " vailed at that time." And again, Vol. III. p. 110. " Theiſm is ſaid to have been " taught more purely, and religion made " more intellectual, by philoſophers, who " refined on the groſs theology, like Pytha- " goras and Plato." Surely then ſo great a man deſerves to be heard, and his teſtimony muſt have much weight on this occaſion. Lord Bolingbroke is however willing to allow it very little or none. He ſays, that this *was no proof, that neceſſary knowlege was wanting.* So that the *worſhip of God, expiation for ſin, aſſurances of the future rewards and puniſhments which await* us, and *a ſyſtem of God's government in heaven and earth*, muſt not be conſidered as neceſſary knowlege. But ſeriouſly, what articles can be of greater conſequence, or more cloſely connected with true religion and virtue, the peace of men's minds, or the intereſts and welfare of ſocieties? Is it poſſible, that theſe ſhould ever be conſidered as points of mere curioſity

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or amuſement, which human pride will daringly and preſumptuouſly employ itſelf in the ſearch of? No, in proportion as they are with-holden from us, or unknown, the mind muſt be in a ſtate of doubt and fear, of darkneſs and great uneaſineſs. How highly expedient then is revelation to remove all theſe, and to bring to light what was ſo much wanted to give encouragement and comfort? Wanted they undoubtedly were; unleſs we ſay, that *Plato* was in theſe things inferior to the other philoſophers: And this would be to contradict the character which our late noble philoſopher has given of them.

THE proper proofs of a Divine revelation from the eighth head. Here *real miracles* are owned to come from God; and therefore they muſt be looked upon, as the ſeals by which He ratifies and confirms the pretenſions of any who would be thought to bring a meſſage from Him, and by which the authority and truth of any revealed articles or doctrines muſt be tried and manifeſted. And *moral evidence*, and *human teſtimony*, are very juſtly repreſented as *the proper proof of ſuch paſt facts, as do not imply a contradiction*; and therefore, we may ſay, of paſt miracles; though

though we may have ſeen nothing of the ſame kind ourſelves, we *diſcover nothing in our experience contradictory* to them, and conſequently nothing to defeat the teſtimony on which they ſtand.

Let us now ſee what his Lordſhip has advanced on the other ſide.

Vol. II. p. 223. The force of traditionary revelation diminiſhes gradually, and ceaſes at laſt altogether.

p. 264. Miracles occaſionally wrought before ſome, and reported by others, are inadequate to univerſal conviction.

Vol. V. p. 30. Any change in the general laws of nature would be a change of the ſyſtem. Theſe laws are invariable.

THE reader, if he is at all attentive, cannot fail to obſerve the inconſiſtency of theſe aſſertions, with the former ones. If there are *real miracles*, there muſt be ſome temporary *change* or ſuſpenſion of the *general laws* and courſe *of nature*. And if they *are operated by the power of God*, and it is declared they can proceed from no other power, this makes ſuch change or ſuſpenſion credible; as there can be no difficulty in

in ſuppoſing the Author of Nature, who at firſt fixed all its laws, and in general ſupports and maintains them, able, whenever he pleaſes, and inclined, whenever ſome wiſe and great ends can be promoted thereby, to change or ſuſpend them, or to act contrary to them ... Again,

2. As theſe facts *imply no contradiction* in themſelves, or to any thing we ſee; the certainty of them is capable of being proved to us, though we never ſaw any inſtance of the ſame ourſelves. Here we cannot have the certainty of demonſtration, but muſt be content to receive them for true, on *high probability*, or moral certainty, i. e. *on the faith of human teſtimony, which is the only proper proof* in the caſe. If this be not defective, it may juſtly be thought convincing to all, who come to the knowlege of it: which quite overturns his Lordſhip's remark, that *miracles occaſionally wrought before ſome, and reported by others, are inadequate to univerſal conviction.* Few comparatively cannot be ſuppoſed eye-witneſſes of miracles. If believed then, they muſt be believed by the far greater part on report. This report may be ſufficiently juſt and full: and when it is ſo, the *conviction* ought to

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be as *univerſal* as the ſpreading of it is . . . Once more,

3. As ſuch report and account of theſe facts may be originally true, and may be known to be true; ſo the memory of it may be preſerved in writing, and thus handed down to the moſt diſtant ages. And when it is ſo, and has long ſtood the teſt of time and enquiry, it will ſtill give ſtrong and full ſatisfaction, and retain its firſt power of convincing. We have no more doubt of many things, which happened a thouſand years ago, than of others, which were tranſacted no longer ſince than fifty. Nor is there any reaſon that we ſhould . . . And this is a ſufficient anſwer to what the noble author ſays of *traditionary revelation*, that its *force diminiſhes gradually, and ceaſes at laſt altogether*. When mathematicians conſider things according to the niceſt exactneſs, this may, for all that I know, in theory appear to be true. But when we come to practice, it is not ſo: or at leaſt, the niceneſs is not worth attending to. If the tradition be found and well continued, the weight ſuppoſed to be imperceptibly withdrawing from it, is too trifling to be regarded; and the tradition will ever be found to anſwer

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its firſt purpoſes; as the ſun does in the firmament; though the particles, of which its light and heat is compoſed, are imagined to be continually waſting and leſſened .... We are not told, *when* the force of traditionary revelation ceaſes altogether, though it ſeems to be a matter of the firſt conſequence to fix this period with exactneſs. In all probability, if it be poſſible to be fixed, our thoughts would be carried down to ſuch an immenſe diſtance of time, that we ſhould ſee at once the abſurdity of the plea; and own, that the traditions, on which we build any thing, have loſt nothing of their credibility, nor are liable to be deſtroyed, as long as we ſhall want them. In ſhort, they rather are confirmed, and acquire ſome new force; as rivers grow larger, the farther they run ... And here, we muſt not omit, that this is certainly the caſe of Chriſtianity; the evidence of which increaſes by the accompliſhment of new prophecies from time to time.

THE ninth head relates to *the Canon of Sacred Scripture.* Here it is not only aſſerted in general, that *the Bible is* a book of authority and *to be believed*; but that *St. Matthew's and St. John's Goſpels are true*; *admitted*

admitted by Lord Bolingbroke as ſuch *on the teſtimony of the fathers* and *the council at Laodicea*; that *the Epiſtles were writ before St. John died*; that *the Apocalypſe* was received as the work of this Apoſtle *ſome centuries before the year* 360; and that the *ſame ſpirit appears throughout the Old Teſtament*: The conſequence of which muſt be, that there is no internal mark of inconſiſtency or contradiction between the ſeveral books of it; and that if there be no flaw in their external teſtimony, their pretenſions may claim credit.

We muſt now turn to a very different account of things.

Vol. I. p. 182. The authenticity of your Sacred Scripture, in the whole, and in every part of them ... has not been yet proved.

Vol. II. p. 158. The hiſtory of the Jews falſified by both Jews and Chriſtians.

p. 185. The Chineſe books of as good authority and authenticity at leaſt as thoſe of the Jews.

p. 270. A different proof of the authenticity and meaning of ſacred hiſtorians neceſſary, than of others.

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The authenticity of the Sacred Scripture has ſuffered much diminution by length of time, and by other ways. p. 274.

The Apocalypſe probably wrote by *Cerinthus*, or ſome other enthuſiaſt .... Perhaps the reveries of a mad judaizing Chriſtian. p. 337. Vol. III. p. 100.

It is impoſſible to ſay when, or by whom, the other books of the Old Teſtament, beſides the Pentateuch, were written, with the leaſt aſſurance ..... All their ſacred writings were compiled after their captivity, and the canon of them was long in ſettling. Vol. II. p. 361.

Who St. Mark and St. Luke were, it is impoſſible to ſay with ſufficient aſſurance, amidſt the fabulous or little authentic reports of Eccleſiaſtical writers. Vol. III. p. 16.

No council in the fourth century deſerved more regard than that of *Trent*. p. 163.

We know neither why the Goſpels, the Epiſtles, and the Apocalypſe we have, were retained, or rather inſerted in the canon, nor why thoſe we have not, were rejected. We are forced to be in this caſe abſolutely implicit: and yet in this caſe, if in any, we ought to have proof, that councils proceeded with integrity. p. 250.

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Vol. V. p. 249. The Sacred Scripture of the Jews were loſt, more than once; and how they were recovered, the laſt time at leaſt, is unknown to us: nay whether they were recovered at all, in a ſtrict ſenſe, may be, and has been, queſtioned by ſome Chriſtians and Jews too.

Vol. V. p. 253. That the traditions contained in the books of the Pentateuch were compiled after *Moſes*'s time, is not at all improbable.

p. 367. Groſs defects, and palpable falſehoods, in almoſt every page of the Sacred Scripture.

THUS it is, that this great man *aſſerts the authority of the Bible*, and *endeavours to place it out of reach of cavil.* One can hardly conceive, what ſhould induce a perſon, who does not appear to have ſtudied diſguiſes, and was neither afraid, nor aſhamed, to write his ſentiments, to lay himſelf open to the charge of ſuch groſs inconſiſtence. For theſe extracts are diametrically oppoſite to thoſe, which we before made and laid before the reader. And they are likewiſe oppoſite to all truth and probability.

1. We muſt obſerve, that when his Lordſhip ſays; *the Bible is to be believed*, the circumſtances

cumſtances of the paſſage ſhew that he meant, *though it is improbable or inconſiſtent*; and in the page following, he ſays, *the reaſon or internal proofs of it are not to be conſidered.* To think that he is in earneſt here, ſeems impoſſible. And yet this is not the only paſſage of this kind to be met with in theſe volumes. Vol. II. p. 225. *The art of navigation* is ſaid to have *decayed and roſe again*, an opinion owned to be taken *from obſcure tradition*. . . . Vol. V. p. 126. *The hypotheſis juſt mentioned I am willing to admit may be true, though it has no foundation in Sacred Scripture or reaſon, and is purely imaginary.* . . . Vol. V. p. 121. *Some things may be admitted piouſly, on the faith of a revelation, concerning which we can ſcarce attempt to reaſon without impiety* . . . How this writer reconciled theſe things to himſelf, or how he could pretend to be led by evidence, when he talked in this manner, is more than I can ſay. His faith, could we imagine him to be ſerious, far outwent that of rational Chriſtians.

2. By the Bible I ſuppoſe Lord Bolingbroke underſtood the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament. If he allowed theſe to have any authority, he muſt allow

their *authenticity* to have *been proved*. . . then *the hiſtory of the Jews*, as it is contained in theſe books, has not been *falſified* either by *Jews or Chriſtians* . . . then the Sacred Scriptures are, I hope, free from *groſs defects and palpable falſhoods*.

3. It is ſomewhat unaccountable, that *the Chineſe books* ſhould be ſaid to be *of as good authority and authenticity at leaſt as thoſe of the Jews*, when we know ſo very little of the former; when very few or none underſtand any thing of their language; and when, but three pages afterwards, we are told, that *from the Jeſuits alone we can have any tolerable information concerning them*. . A ſet of people, who have no high character for exactneſs and veracity, and who ought not, I think, to be put on a footing with the whole Jewiſh nation, however low our opinion of theſe may be, when they bear atteſtation to books, wherein their laws and religion were contained.

4. I wiſh our noble author had been more explicit in telling us, wherein conſiſts the *difference of the proof of the authenticity and meaning of ſacred hiſtorians*, and of others; and what that proof is, which in this caſe is neceſſary, and would be ſatisfactory.

factory. That our care and caution ought to riſe in proportion to the importance of the ſubject we are examining, is true. But it is true alſo, that we ought not to expect greater evidence than the ſubject will bear: if we do, we deſerve no ſatisfaction. As to the authenticity of writings, this muſt depend upon tradition. Written tradition is undoubtedly the ſtrongeſt. The tradition received by a whole nation, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, without the leaſt diſſent or variation, in a matter about which it concerned them much not to be miſtaken in, muſt in this caſe have the very higheſt weight. Better proof of the authenticity of any ancient hiſtory we cannot have. And this we have for that of the Old Teſtament. As to the New, the proof is as ſtrong as poſſible, and ſtronger than can be pleaded in favour of any other books; as no others have been in ſo many hands, or have been ſo often quoted, tranſlated, and appealed to, from the very age in which they were wrote, through every intermediate century, and in every country in which they were known, to this very day. So that, if by the different proof required be meant a greater number of atteſtations; we may

truly boaſt, that our ſacred writings can lay claim to it. But if any difference in the kind of proof be intended, this cannot be neceſſary, becauſe in the common courſe of things it is not poſſible.

Next, as to the *meaning of ſacred and other hiſtorians*, what *different proof* of this can there be? The ways of coming at the right ſenſe of authors, whether ſacred or profane, muſt be alike .... a juſt knowlege of their language .... a careful conſideration of the context .... an accurate compariſon of parallel places .... a due uſe of any other helps which may be proper, and in our reach; ſuch as conſultations of learned men, and learned books, which we may uſefully apply to, without yielding up our judgments to them univerſally and implicitly ... Theſe methods are common to all writings. And if there are any peculiar to ſuch as are ſacred, which may be requiſite to underſtand theſe, they are an humility and docility of ſpirit, free from bad prejudices, open to conviction, and willing to receive the truth ... and prayer to God for his aſſiſtance in this matter ... But perhaps neither of theſe was the difference in his Lordſhip's view.

5. The reader has my ſentiments already about the diminution of traditionary proof. Nor can I ſee that *the authenticity of the Sacred Scriptures has ſuffered*, in this reſpect, *by time* or *by* any *other way* whatever. We are ſufficiently apprized who the authors of the ſeveral books of the New Teſtament were. If one or two were anciently doubted, this ſhews the care of thoſe early ages in a matter of this conſequence; and that they did not proceed raſhly or at random, nor admit books into the canon without enquiry or examination: and therefore when they did admit them, we have reaſon to receive them; as we have to receive all ſuch, concerning which they had full aſſurance from the very firſt. What they rejected, they knew, were not the writings of the Apoſtles; and might ſee in them many things inconſiſtent with theſe, which therefore ſhewed it impoſſible for them to be genuine. There is then no room to accuſe, or to ſuſpect, the primitive church of not proceeding with integrity in this matter. And indeed, we have poſitive proof enough of this, when we remember the veneration they had for their Sacred Scriptures, the hazards they ran, and the torments they endured,

rather then yield theſe up, or betray or deny the doctrines contained in them.

It may be difficult to be aſſured of every particular concerning St. Mark and St. Luke; though, that the one was a companion of St. Paul, and the other of St. Peter, is, I believe, univerſally allowed. But that difficulty will not affect the authenticity of their Goſpels. This reſts on the ſame bottom with St. Matthew's and St. John's; as indeed the Acts and all the Epiſtles do. And the noble author ſhould *admit* them all, or none, *on the ſame teſtimony of the fathers and Doctors of the Church, who not only bear this teſtimony ſeparately; but aſſembled in a council at Laodicea ... made a canon of theſe.* This, by the way, was a *council in the fourth century.* And as he thought proper to depend upon them in ſo weighty a point, I would hope this at leaſt muſt be excepted out of the general cenſure againſt the councils in this century, and *deſerve more regard than that of Trent.* Would his Lordſhip indeed admit the Goſpels on the teſtimony of the council of Trent? ... We have ſeen, how variouſly this great man thought of the Apocalypſe. He aſcribed it to *Cerinthus*, though it has nothing of

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Cerinthianiſm in it . . . to *ſome other enthuſiaſt*, to ſome *mad Judaiſing Chriſtian*. Strange, when he owned, that it had *maintained great credit in the Church*, as the work of St. John, *for ſome centuries before the year* 360. This muſt carry it up near St. John's days, if not quite to them. SOME *centuries* muſt be two at leaſt, and ſhould, in ſtrict propriety of language, mean *three*. And this will bring us to the middle of the firſt century. And the queſtion then will be, whether the Church in thoſe very early times, or Lord Bolingbroke at this diſtance from them, were the beſt judges concerning the author of this book?

6. And thus much for the authenticity and Canon of the New Teſtament. With regard to the Old, his Lordſhip has revived ſome cavils, and attacks it with vehemence. This muſt firſt reſt, as we have ſeen, on the care of the Jewiſh Church. And we may add, that the authenticity and divinity of it is allowed to be ſuppoſed by Chriſtianity; as it was certainly believed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles. On this account therefore, were there no other, it deſerves our religious regard and reverence. Its original authority is thus confirmed and ratified

anew . . . But we are told, that *we cannot be aſſured of the authors of any books of it, beſides the Pentateuch.* Will he then allow, that the Pentateuch was written by Moſes, and is genuine? I fear not, as he ſays, it *is not at all improbable, that the traditions* here *contained, were compiled after Moſes's time.* This however will fall under our next head. Let us confine our thoughts at preſent to the other books of the Old Teſtament. Many of the authors of theſe are well known. The names of the prophets ſtand in their reſpective writings. David, Samuel, and Solomon are univerſally allowed to have compoſed ſome works, which are aſcribed to them. Nor is there any good reaſon to ſet aſide, or to queſtion, this tradition. To ſay, that any of theſe writings were compiled after the Jewiſh captivity, is talking at large, without proof or probability. Some others indeed were ſo; as Eſra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles. But the two former of theſe bear their author's names, and theſe very reſpectable names too. The laſt has not this advantage, nor a few other books. But this is no objection againſt their authority. They are doubtleſs as ancient as they pretend to be.

be. And though we cannot be infallibly aſſured of their true writers; they, who firſt received them, might, and moſt probably were. In a word, many other old books of great uſe lye under the ſame difficulty, as men employed in critical ſearches well know.

7. But *the* Jewiſh *canon was long in ſettling*. I ſee not how it could be otherwiſe. It could not be ſettled, before it was compleated. And a long ſeries of time paſſed, between the writing of the firſt book and the laſt. If it be meant, that Eſra, or whoever is ſuppoſed to have ſettled their canon, was a long time about it; neither does this appear to be fact; or if it were, appear to be in the leaſt to its diſcredit. Care, enquiry, and judgment were proper in ſuch a work.

8. We are told, that the *Jewiſh Scriptures were loſt more than once, and how they were laſt recovered, is unknown*, or *whether they were recovered at all, is doubted*. Could indeed this be made fully to appear, it might ſhake their credit: but it neither has, nor can. Nor do I know, what the noble writer intended here to inſinuate or allude to. I ſee no reaſon to ſuſpect theſe books

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of being forged; nor can the time be aſſigned, when it was poſſible to forge them, and palm them as genuine upon the Jewiſh nation, and in a few years after on the reſt of the world. Beſides the different ſtiles they are wrote in, according to the different ſtations and educations of their authors, and the harmony and agreement between them all, leaves us no room to deny either their authenticity, or their truth.

IT cannot be expected, that in theſe ſtrictures I ſhould enter into a fuller account of theſe things; which indeed would be needleſs, as they have been ſhewn at large over and over, and may be found in many books already extant, by thoſe who chuſe to enquire into them. What I have farther to offer on this ſubject will come under the review of the tenth head, which is *concerning Moſes, his hiſtory, and law.*

Here it is owned, that there was ſuch a perſon as Moſes, *the leader and legiſlator* of the Jews; that he *proved his miſſion by miracles, the leaſt part of* which were *convincing*; that *he made a ſcruple of teaching a future ſtate,* becauſe it *was not revealed to* him; and therefore we muſt imagine him to have been a man of credit, and to be believed, when he

he taught other points as what had been revealed to him; that the *name*, by which he deſcribes the Supreme Being, is *ſublime and proper*; we may add, more expreſſive of his neceſſary exiſtence, and incommunicable perfections, than any which philoſophy, when moſt improved and refined, hath ever given; that *moſt ſublime ideas of God* are taught in other parts of the Old Teſtament; that *the traditions of the Pentateuch are very ancient*; that the account there given of the *longer lives of the firſt men is probable*; that *the law of the Jews* was ſufficient to *maintain peace and good order among themſelves*; which I apprehend to be the end, and the perfection, of all national laws; and that *Chriſtianity is founded on Judaiſm*, and the *redemption* on the *fall*; ſo that this latter diſpenſation ſuppoſes and proves the truth of the other.

Lay all theſe things together, and allow them their juſt weight, and you cannot, I think, have any low or contemptible notion of Moſes, or the writings aſcribed to him. A more honourable character of both can ſcarce be given. And no one, who pretends to the name of a Chriſtian, can diſbelieve the truth, or renounce the authority, of this moſt ancient work; though there

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may be, as it cannot but be expected that there would be, some difficulties in it, which at this time of day can hardly be cleared. Longinus, one of the best critics of heathen antiquity, bears a noble, and we may be sure, a disinterested, testimony, not only to the authenticity, but to the sublimity and beauty of the account of the creation. The relations, which follow this account, instruct us in several events of great and universal importance; which lead us not only to the belief and worship and obedience of the One True God, but to consider the whole world as related together, and descended from one common parent. And lastly, if we view Moses only as a legislator, he deserves to be ranked among, nay to have preference above, all the celebrated legislators of antiquity.

How shall I now enter upon the unpleasing task, which my method calls upon me to undertake; and set before the reader in one view the very different, the very shocking, accounts of this great man, which Lord Bolingbroke has thought proper to give in the philosophical essays? But this must be done, that we may form an impartial judgment.

It is ſaid, that the ſacred authors writ agreeably to all the vulgar notions of the ages and countries, in which they lived. Vol. I. p. 135.

The Jews borrowed their knowlege from the Egyptians. p. 147.

Adam's original knowlege and perfections, as derived from God, are ridiculed. p. 287.

The ſimplicity of true theiſm could never ſubſiſt in the figures of poetry. p. 296.

The Moſaic account is plainly inconſiſtent with itſelf, as it ſtands in the books we have under the name of Moſes. p. 299.

Among the ſuperſtitions of Moſaic inſtitution there was one, which could be charged neither on the Egyptian, nor any other heathen nation, and which ſurpaſſed the moſt extravagant of theirs .. he brought the notions of the True God down to the low and groſs conceptions of the multitude; and expoſed the majeſty of this Awful Being to their profanations. p. 317.

God is ſaid to have given himſelf a name, a very magnificent one indeed, and ſuch a one as might denote the Supreme Being; but ſtill a name, by which he was to be diſtinguiſhed as the tutelary God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, of one family firſt, p. 318.

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and then of one nation particularly, and almoſt excluſively of all others.

Vol. II. p. 151. The hiſtory of the creation not to be reconciled to nature, reaſon, philoſophy, nor natural theology (for natural theology teaches us to think of God in a manner very oppoſite to the ideas, which Moſes gives us of the Supreme Being and of his operations) &c.

p. 195. The chronology, founded on the genealogies in the book of Geneſis, ſuppoſes the tradition of theſe revelations, by which God communicated himſelf to man, to have been preſerved ſo little a time after the deluge, that it gives a color to ſuppoſe all the nations of the world... ignorant of the One True God;

p. 198. Or totally ignorant of the deluge.

p. 206. The account of the rebellions of the Iſraelites in an age of miracles attempted to be diſapproved.

p. 209. Unexceptionable revelations, real miracles, and certain traditions could never be ineffectual.

p. 224. The immenſe duration of the ſyſtems of created beings.

Vol. IV. p. 5. In the hiſtory and law of Moſes, beaſts as well as men, are repreſented and treated

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as accountable creatures . . . At the hand of every beaſt will I require, &c. Thou ſhalt deſtroy even the beaſt, Deut. 13. In caſe of beſtiality the beaſt was alſo to be killed. p. 6.

The firſt principle of the Iſraelites policy eccleſiaſtical and civil, was inſociability. p. 94.

The judgments of his choſen people were often repugnant to the law of nature. p. 106.

A ſpirit of injuſtice, which eſtabliſhed one rule for themſelves, and another for every other perſon, ran through all their judicial proceedings.

God repreſented in the Old Teſtament as approving and commanding the moſt abominable violations of the general laws of nature. p. 136.

The whole ſyſtem of the law of Moſes, like the whole ſyſtem of his conduct, was founded on murder. See the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy. p. 138.

Moſes's miracles tended to the deſtruction of mankind . . . Moſes exerciſed, and commanded the exerciſe of, a political power, the moſt tyrannical, the moſt contrary to the laws of nature, and the moſt irreconcileable to every ſentiment of humanity. p. 145.

God, according to Moſes, degraded to the character of an unjuſt and cruel tyrant, p. 151.

who authorized, and even commanded, his miniſters expreſsly to puniſh without meaſure, without diſcernment, and without forms of juſtice. This Mr. Locke believed.

p. 263. The account of the fall of man is, in all it's circumſtances, abſolutely irreconcileable to every idea we can frame of wiſdom, juſtice, and goodneſs, to ſay nothing of the dignity of the Supreme Being.

p. 282. They who compiled the written law, from Eſdras to Simon the juſt, had as little diſcernment in the choice of their materials, as they, who compiled the traditions of the oral law afterwards.

Vol. V. p. 217. The God of Moſes is partial, unjuſt, and cruel.

p. 244. Many traditions, though fabulous, leave no reaſon to doubt, that arts and ſciences, and even barbarity, were carried from the weſt to the eaſt, as well as from the eaſt to the weſt, in ages quite unknown to us; which is enough to ſhake the authority of that particular hiſtory, wherein it is reported, that the world was re-peopled from one ſpot, and by one family, after an univerſal deluge.

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The tradition of Noah's deluge is vouched by no other authority than that of Moſes... And yet it is impoſſible to conceive, that the memory of ſuch a cataſtrophe ſhould have been known only by one people, and that not the moſt ancient neither, or being known to all, ſhould have been preſerved only, in one corner of the earth... this tradition then liable to ſuſpicion. p. 272.

It is impoſſible to excuſe all the puerile, romantic, and abſurd circumſtances in Moſes's hiſtory of the creation, which nothing could produce but the habit of dealing in trifling traditions, and a moſt profound ignorance. It is impoſſible to read what he writ on this ſubject, without feeling contempt for him, as a philoſopher, and horror as a divine. p. 284.

The ſun much older probably than our world. Vol. V. p. 293.

The legiſlator of the Jews included no other than one ſolar ſyſtem in his idea of the univerſe. p. 331.

In the Pentateuch are ſuch evident marks of falſehood, as can be objected to no other writings, except to profeſſed romances, nor even always to them. p. 333.

Moſes's writings have no hiſtorical authenticity. He was not cotemporary with p. 338.

the creation of which he writes ... his hiſtory not received in the age immediately following the publication of it.

p. 339. Much of the hiſtory, and ſome of the law, perhaps, contained in the writings aſcribed to Moſes, came down to thoſe who quote them, by traditions of uncertain original, though they were all alike aſcribed by the Jews, to the ſame legiſlator.

p. 340. If the Pentateuch was public before the time of David, it does not follow, that Mo-
p. 341. ſes was the author of it ... time enough between them to make fabulous traditions paſs for authentic hiſtory.

p. 343. The whole hiſtory of the Old Teſtament founded on incredible ancedotes, conſiſts of little elſe.

p. 344. When we ſpeak of the Pentateuch, as of an authentic hiſtory, and quote Moſes as ſolemnly as Don Quixote did Turpin, are we much leſs mad than he was? When I ſit down to read this hiſtory ... I am ready to think myſelf tranſported into a ſort of fairy land, where every thing is done by magic and inchantment.

p. 350. The Jews deſerve, on many accounts, to be truſted the leaſt ... it is improbable their hiſtory ſhould have been written, and impoſſible

impoſſible that it ſhould have been preſerved, with a ſtrict regard to truth.

The law of the Jews produced a legal injuſtice and cruelty to others. p. 357.

Jacob's vow, Gen. 28. moſt impiouſly intereſted and craving. p. 358.

A perfect law would produce its effect by a certain moral neceſſity reſulting from itſelf. p. 360.

No law ever operated ſo weak and ſo uncertain an effect as the law of Moſes did. This law has proved more ineffectual than any other. p. 361.

The moſt imperfect ſyſtem of human laws would have been rendered effectual by the occaſional miracles, which ſupported the Jewiſh. p. 362.

The ſame paſſages in the law and prophets may be taken in hiſtorical, myſtical, literal, and allegorical ſenſes . . . they, who writ them, knew ſo little what they writ, that they foretold ſome future, when they imagined they were relating ſome paſt event. p. 364.

When this God proceeds to the creation of man, he calls on other beings, we know not by the text how many, to co-operate with him, and to make man in his and their likeneſs. This ſeems to lay a foundation p. 369.

for Polytheiſm . . . and is inconſiſtent with the Unity of the Godhead.

p. 370. Moſes is charged with teaching the creation of light, and the diſtinction between night and day, before the ſun, moon, and ſtars.

p. 372. God is made a principal actor with the ſerpent, and Adam, and Eve.

COULD any one believe, that all this could come from the ſame hand, which wrote the paſſages we before extracted under this head? If theſe are juſt and true, and nothing but truth could force any thing in favour of Moſes from one who appears ſo very averſe to him; they are alone a ſufficient anſwer to all this torrent of abuſe and cenſure; which is for the moſt part abſolutely unſupported by any evidence whatever: And where there is really any room for doubt, ſufficient anſwers have been frequently given. Nor have theſe anſwers been invalidated by his Lordſhip, nor the objections received any addition of ſtrength from his pen. In ſhort, if there is any thing new in theſe paſſages, it is the ſpirit with which they are wrote, which may be thought to exceed every thing we have ſeen before; but which, it is hoped, will not in the opinion of

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any lover of impartiality or decency, be thought ſufficient to diſcredit the character of the oldeſt, and hitherto one of the moſt eſteemed writers in the world.

To animadvert on each of theſe articles at large, would run theſe papers out into too great a length. I ſhall therefore endeavour to be ſhort in my reflections upon them.

1. The four firſt articles, though far from being ſimilar, I ſhall diſmiſs under one number; as they are not of equal conſequence with thoſe that follow . . . Whoever *ſaid, that the ſacred authors writ agreeably to all the vulgar notions of their ages and countries*, went greatly too far. Theſe general words will include any errors about religion, which might be entertained; as well as minuter miſtakes, which the ſtudy of natural philoſophy has ſince diſproved. Theſe latter they might fall into without hurting their character: as it was not their deſign, nor was it neceſſary for them, to teach right notions of philoſophy or aſtronomy. This my Lord owns of Moſes, and it is true of all the others.

His Lordſhip very peremptorily aſſerts that the Jews borrowed their knowlege from the Egyptians. This is a diſputed queſtion among learned men; and unleſs an *ipſe dixit* will decide it, it remains juſt

where it was....But ſlaves may be thought leſs likely to teach their maſters, than to be taught by them. Perhaps ſo: yet it ſhould be conſidered, that the Jews had not been always ſlaves; that Joſeph in particular, to whom the Egyptians had been ſo much obliged, and who *was ſet over all the land*, muſt have had great ſway and influence over them; that till *another king aroſe, who knew not*, or remembered not, or regarded not, the benefits they had received from him, it is moſt probable, that his family and relations were held in reverence and eſteem, and communicated ſome knowlege to the people, among whom they ſojourned. Moſes, it is true, was *brought up in all the learning of the Egyptians*. And yet it is not credible, that he learned his religion and law from them. They, who think the golden calf was taken from one of their idols, can never think the ſyſtem, wherein all idolatry is ſo ſtrictly forbidden, borrowed from any thing he ſaw among them. There is then no reaſon from hence to doubt the his truth of his own account, that he received his immediately from heaven.

* Why ſhould *Adam's original perfections, as derived from God*, be *ridiculed?* Suppoſing him

* I do not deny, that ſome of the inſtitutions in the Pentateuch were made in conformity with ſome ancient practices. But

him to be the firſt man, which nothing is ſaid to diſprove, the account given of him appears highly probable. We muſt ſuppoſe him created, not indeed impeccable, which would have been inconſiſtent with his liberty, but in his full ſtrength both of body and mind... When it is ſaid, that *the ſimplicity of true theiſm could never ſubſiſt in the figures of poetry*, I ſuppoſe the poetical parts of the Old Teſtament are ſtruck at. And this would be to exclude a very great, and a very edifying, part of Scripture. But the obſervation is not true. Poetry has been thought the firſt and earlieſt way, in which religious inſtructions were conveyed. And thoſe paſſages of the Old Teſtament which our noble author owns to give moſt ſublime ideas of the majeſty of the Supreme Being, which muſt in a great meaſure conſtitute true theiſm, are ſo many fine ſtrains of poetry.

But theſe might be innocent ones; they might be borrowed from other nations as well as the Egyptians; they might be derived from the patriarchal times; as, to mention no more, circumciſion was. Nay, though we ſhould allow, that the parallel cuſtoms were originally Egyptian, yet, this will not render theſe inſtitutions at all ſuſpected. Why might not theſe be wiſe compliances, intended to ſerve ſome good end? As we know, that other things were wiſely appointed by Moſes, in oppoſition to the Egyptian ſuperſtitions? And what one thing is there in the Jewiſh law common to any of theſe? I know of none.

2. Of the following articles, I ſhall only ſelect ſuch as have ſome appearance of argument to ſupport them. For general abuſe and declamation, of which the greateſt part conſiſt, neither deſerve, nor need, nor indeed will admit of, any anſwer . . . By the *magnificent name*, which his Lordſhip acknowleges *might denote the Supreme Being*, I preſume he means, I AM THAT I AM. But how then could he ſay, that this was a name, *by which* God *was to be diſtinguiſhed as the tutelary God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, of one family firſt, and then of one nation particularly, and almoſt excluſively of all others.* Does not every one ſee apparent miſrepreſentation here, and this grounded on groſs inaccuracy? That name moſt ſtrongly denotes neceſſary exiſtence. But has this any relation to one family, more than to another? In the next verſe indeed he mentions his being the God of their fathers, to whom his promiſe and covenant had been made; and nothing could be more proper than this to give Moſes credence among the Iſraelites, and to ſupport and encourage their ſpirits, then almoſt broken with the ſeverity of their bondage. But can this be fairly conſtrued as a declaration, that he was their God, I will not ſay *almoſt*, but in any degree, *exclu-*

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cluſively of all other people? It cannot, any farther, than as all others had in a manner, as far as they could, excluded him by their idolatry and diſobedience. Nor can the ſame be collected from any other paſſage in the Pentateuch. In this God is always repreſented as the Univerſal Creator, Lord, and Governor, of the whole world; diſtinguiſhed from all idols and local deities, and infinitely ſuperior in power and excellency to all that the heathen worſhipped, whether in heaven, or in earth. Thus is He deſcribed, even in thoſe paſſages, wherein his particular protection and bleſſing of the people of Iſrael is gratefully acknowleged: the ſongs of Moſes will afford inſtances of this.

And it is farther obſervable, that neither is he conſidered in theſe, nor indeed in any other parts of Scripture, as the tutelary God of the Jews, in the ſame ſenſe, in which the heathen deities were reſpected as the guardians of any particular kingdoms. The piety, integrity and virtue of the Jews were the only conditions, on which they could ever expect his defence and favour. And whenever they ſwerved from theſe, they were forſaken by him, and given over into the hand of their enemies. Whereas the tutelary Gods of other nations are repreſented

ſented as conſtantly and fondly eſpouſing their cauſe, without any regard to the goodneſs of this, or of their characters. In a word, though God is ſtyled by Moſes the God of Abraham, &c. yet this no way degrades him from his natural dignity. *All the families of the earth are* at the ſame time ſaid to be in his view and thoughts, to be called and *bleſſed by him*, when they ſhould return from their idolatries.

3. The chronology of the book of Geneſis has its difficulties, as indeed all ancient chronology has. Lord Bolingbroke obſerves, that it *ſuppoſes the tradition of the Divine Revelations to have been preſerved ſo little a time after the deluge, that it gives a color to ſuppoſe all the world ignorant of the One True God, or totally ignorant of the deluge.* This is expreſſed ſomewhat obſcurely. If I underſtand him right, his meaning is, that according to that chronology, it was but a little time after the deluge, that the world became idolatrous, and inſenſible of ſo ſevere a judgment. And this, I ſuppoſe, intended to inſinuate the improbability of this account, of the chronology, if not of the deluge itſelf ... Now the book of Geneſis has no where, that I know, pointed out exactly the commencement of idolatry after

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the flood. And unleſs we knew this, we are not ſure of the very foundation of the objection. There might have been an interval of time long enough; gradually to introduce errors and ſuperſtitions in religion. Gradually: For there is no occaſion, and it would be unnatural, to ſuppoſe a total defection taking place at once.

If the worſhip of the Sun was, as moſt learned men believe, the firſt kind of idolatry; it is not improbable, that they, who firſt practiſed this, might at the ſame time retain a belief of the One True God, and of the flood. The ſun might be conſidered as the moſt glorious viſible emblem or image of the Deity, and no diſhonour might then be intended to God, by the honor paid to his Creature. I am not apologizing for this, which ſoon ended in groſs idolatry. However, ſhould we ſuppoſe this ſin to have begun in the days of Abraham, which is perhaps as early, perhaps much earlier than we ought to fix it; yet this was above four hundred years after the flood. And when we conſider how ſoon the impreſſion of paſt mercies and judgments too, eſpecially of ſuch as were not ſent to ourſelves, wears off; we ſhall not, I think, be ſurprized, if in ſuch a courſe of years, the tradition even of

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the deluge was not ſufficient to deter ſome men from idolatry; a vice, of which we have no accounts before the flood, and therefore which might not be ſuppoſed to have drawn this vengeance on the world. The hiſtory therefore of this may be very credible, and is not in the leaſt invalidated, nor even in appearance inconſiſtent, on account of what happened ſo long after it.

Nor will this tradition be weakened by what this noble author afterwards ſays againſt it. Indeed the ſtrength of prejudice cannot appear ſtronger, than when *fabulous traditions* of what is ſuppoſed to have happened *in ages quite unknown*, are ſet up to *ſhake the authority of* this *hiſtory* of Moſes. This is really oppoſing error, allowed error, to truth, and groſs darkneſs to light... But, *the tradition of Noah's deluge is vouched by no other authority.* Rather, it is not related in all its awful circumſtances ſo fully by any ſubſequent writer. For learned men, laymen as well as divines, have found ſome very ſtrong confirming traces of it in heathen antiquity. So that it is not true, that the general *memory* of it was *preſerved only in one corner of the earth.* See the excellent Mr. Ray's Phiſio-Theological Diſcourſes.

But might it not have been expected, that other writers ſhould have been more parti-

particular on ſo intereſting a ſubject? I anſwer, the authority of one plain hiſtory is not to be ſhaken by the bare ſilence of others; and much leſs by theſe not being equally circumſtantial. This would make the wildeſt work in the ſtudy of hiſtory, and leave us little or nothing to depend upon. It is not to be wondered at, that in a long courſe of years error ſhould mix itſelf in traditions of facts, and occaſion their being firſt diſbelieved and then forgot. To learn the truth of theſe, it is uſual to have recourſe to ſuch writers as lived neareſt the times when they happened. Moſes therefore, tho' we ſhould not inſiſt on the regard due to him as an inſpired writer, deſerves far more credit in this caſe, than any ſucceeding hiſtorians can claim; the earlieſt of all heathen ones writing many centuries after him.

4. Let us next conſider whether *the account of the rebellions of the Iſraelites in an age of miracles* be improbable. The noble author thinks, that if theſe and the revelations were *real*, they muſt have been *effectual*; that whereas *a perfect law would produce its effect by a moral neceſſity reſulting from itſelf*, and *the moſt imperfect ſyſtem of human laws would have been rendered effectual by the occaſional miracles which ſupported the Jewiſh*, the law

law of Moſes *has proved more ineffectual than any other* . . . Now, for very many centuries this is not true. We own however the caſe was ſo at firſt. Long after the giving of the law, the nation of the Jews were very prone to idolatry. Nay in the midſt of miracles, they on every occaſion murmured and were diſobedient; and even at the firſt, made them a molten calf. This is their great reproach. But it is unjuſt to reproach the law, or diſbelieve the miracles, on this account. This only ſhews, that the very ſtrongeſt proofs and evidences will not always prevail over obſtinacy and unruly inclinations. While human liberty continues, men cannot be forced into conviction, or into duty: they may be guilty of the moſt abſurd and unaccountable conduct. There is no ſuch thing as any *moral neceſſity reſulting from* any law, however *perfect* it be, to prevent this. We need, I think, no inſtances of this truth. Nor is the inſtance of the Jews the only one recorded, where miracles themſelves have been ſlighted. And though we may be apt to flatter ourſelves, that had we lived in their days, we ſhould not have been partakers with them in their iniquities; yet this is much more than we can be ſure of. We may now conſider them with the aſtoniſhment

niſhment and deteſtation they deſerve: but we are now out of the reach of the temptations to them, and at a diſtance from thoſe evil cuſtoms which then prevailed. And if we reflect, how often we have ſinned in direct contradiction to the cleareſt voice of reaſon and conſcience, we ſhall not, I preſume, pronounce the perverſeneſs of the Jews to be incredible.

5. The texts, which the noble author produces, do not repreſent *beaſts as accountable creatures*. In order to create in the mind the deepeſt ſenſe, and the ſtrongeſt deteſtation, of the guilt of murder, idolatry, and beſtiality, the brutes, eſpecially when they have been inſtrumental, though without guilt, in theſe vices, are ordered to be killed: which law appears highly agreeable to nature. Thus alſo future accidents of the ſame horrid nature may be prevented; and the guilty owners of ſuch cattle are in ſome meaſure puniſhed by the loſs of them. And what is there in this, which can deſerve ſo ſtrange a cenſure, or admit ſo violent an interpretation, as that above?

6. *Inſociability, injuſtice, repugnance to the law of nature*, are charged upon the ſtatutes and judgments of the Jews. *The law of Moſes, like his conduct*, is ſaid to be *founded*

on murder. His *miracles tended to the deſtruction of mankind. God*, according to him, *an unjuſt and cruel tyrant* ... It is impoſſible for any pious mind to read ſuch paſſages without horror. The fulleſt proof is but ſufficient to juſtify them. And yet all the proof, which has been vouchſafed us, is, that Moſes is repreſented as an inſtrument in God's hand of puniſhing the pride and blaſphemy of the Egyptians, of delivering the people of Iſrael from unjuſt and cruel ſervitude, and of propounding a law, wherein all idolatry was ſtrictly forbidden, and all idolaters to be puniſhed with death. If the miracles ſaid to have been worked by him were real, whether they were of a beneficial or of a punitive nature, (though they did not *all* tend to the deſtruction of mankind) they muſt be owned ſufficient evidences of his Divine commiſſion; and if ſo, we may be very ſure that he neither did, nor commanded, any thing, but what was juſt and right, though at this diſtance of time there ſhould be ſome parts of his laws which we cannot account for. They are in general a wiſe body of ſtatutes, contrived, as his Lordſhip could not help acknowleging, to *maintain peace and good order among* the Jews *themſelves*, and to make them a religious and

and an happy people. What this illuſtrious writer calls *inſociability*, may more properly be termed, an avoiding all communion with the idolatrous and ſcandalouſly wicked nations round them; and what he ſtyles *cruelty*, was in truth no other than in purſuance of the Divine orders denouncing the Divine vengeance on them. And if the giving ſuch orders were injuſtice or cruelty in God, it will follow, that he cannot take vengeance on any guilty people. For ſurely he may do this, not only immediately by his own arm, but by the means and inſtrumentality of any other people: as we have all reaſon to think he frequently does. And though in the common courſe of Providence he does not give out his expreſs commands to this purpoſe, as he did to the Jews; yet this is no objection againſt theſe commands. In fine, not to dwell any longer on a point, which has been ſo well conſidered by the writers in defence of Chriſtianity, whoſe vindications are left totally untouched and in their full ſtrength by Lord Bolingbroke, we may and ought to regard the Canaanites, &c. as an example ſet up and held forth *in terrorem* to all nations in all times; that they may avoid ſuch idolatry and ſhocking immorality, and be encouraged to believe

in, and to ſerve the True God only. And thus will this part of ſacred hiſtory be ever profitable, and the deſign of recording and preſerving it fully anſwered.

7. As to the fall of man, if we believe his Lordſhip, it is *in all its circumſtances abſolutely irreconcileable to every idea we can frame of wiſdom, juſtice, and goodneſs, to ſay nothing of the dignity of the Supreme Being.* But this is mere aſſertion without the leaſt proof. Nay the contrary is moſt apparent to any one, who ſeriouſly conſiders the whole hiſtory. Nothing can be more credible, than that man was created upright; that he might be ſeduced from his duty by a wicked being ſuperior in power and ſubtlety to himſelf; that he might thus expoſe himſelf to miſery; that God, though foreknowing that he would fall, yet having created him free, but not impeccable, might permit him to do ſo; that God might pronounce a ſentence on him, and one ſtill ſeverer on his ſeducer; and laſtly, that he might leave ſome diſtant hopes of his reſtoration and recovery. This is plainly the ſubſtance of the account. And though indeed *God is made a principal actor in it*, yet his infinite wiſdom, juſtice, goodneſs, and dignity are well preſerved. And I am ſure many phænomena,

nomena, which we are to this hour witneſſes, nay conſcious, of, very much confirm the truth of the hiſtory; which will not be ſet aſide by our ignorance, in one or two minuter articles.

8. Lord Bolingbroke objects againſt the *hiſtorical authenticity of Moſes's writings. He was not cotemporary with the creation of which he writes.* And is no hiſtory then authentic, or true, which I ſuppoſed his Lordſhip meant here, but ſuch as are wrote by cotemporaries? Grant that this circumſtance is an advantage in favour of an author: yet is there no way of coming at truth and certainty of facts without being witneſs of them? Or was it poſſible for any man to be witneſs of the whole proceſs of the creation, ſome part of which muſt have been, before he was himſelf created? Tradition might then ſufficiently convey many particulars: and inſpiration might more eaſily inſtruct Moſes in the truth of the whole. This is the advantage he pretends to and claims: and this character muſt be proved to be falſe, before we can conclude, that he could not know the truth of what he wrote.

But it is ſaid farther, that *his hiſtory* was *not received in the age immediately following*

the publication of it. This, we may be ſure, is more than the noble writer could poſſibly know; and therefore, if ever any thing was, is ſaid at random. That the hiſtory and the law of Moſes is cited and alluded to by ſubſequent authors of the ſame nation, is certain. That a body of laws ſaid to be attended with, and confirmed by, ſuch ſtupendous and ſolemn miracles, ſhould in any age be invented and palmed upon the nation, as the work of their legiſlator; That traditions of an uncertain original ſhould be aſcribed to him; That the Jews ſhould ever have ſubmitted to ſo burthenſome an inſtitution, which they appeared ſo continually prone to ſwerve from, unleſs they had all reaſon to be ſatisfied of its Divine authority; are points too abſurd to be ſuppoſed, and indeed impoſſible ever to have happened. It was therefore unworthy of his Lordſhip's character thus to attack the authenticity of Moſes by ſuch aſſertions and ſuggeſtions, as would overthrow the authenticity of every ancient author whatever. We may as well ſay, that there were never ſuch perſons as Moſes and David, as that the writings aſcribed to them were not their's; or that the *Pentateuch*, tho' *public before the time of David*, ſhould be nothing but *fabulous traditions* compiled after Moſes.

Moſes. Works ſo reſpectable in themſelves, and of ſuch mighty conſequence, could not have been falſly introduced; and whenever forged, the forgery muſt have preſently appeared.

Equally groundleſs is the parallel between the written and the oral law. No man, who has ever read both, can put theſe on a level. Could all the objections againſt the former be made good, they would not amount to the leaſt part of the ſhameful and abominable impoſſibilities of the latter. And therefore the materials from which theſe are ſuppoſed to have been *compiled*, could not be equally authentic. Not that there is any reaſon to imagine the written law ſo late compiled, as the time of Eſdras, if any thing elſe be meant, than the collecting together the books of the Old Teſtament, and forming them into one body or Canon of Scripture.

9. I never could read that *vow of Jacob*, in his journey to Padan-Aram, after he had received the aſſurances and promiſes of God's protection and bleſſing in a night viſion, without being particularly affected with it; and am therefore ſurprized to find our noble Lord call it *moſt impiouſly intereſted and craving*. Let it ſpeak for itſelf. " If God

" will be with me, and will keep me in " this way that I go, and will give me " bread to eat, and raiment to put on; ſo " that I come again to my father's houſe in " peace: then ſhall the Lord be my God, " and this ſtone which I have ſet for a pil- " lar, ſhall be God's houſe: And of all " that thou ſhalt give me, I will ſurely give " the tenth to thee." Had this paſſage appeared in any heathen author, I am confident it muſt have been admired. I can ſee nothing like impiety or avarice in it. On the contrary, dependance on the Divine Providence, contentedneſs, and reſolutions of conſecrating a part of his ſubſtance to the uſes of religion and charity, breathe through the whole. If any thing is ſtipulated for here, it is the common protection of Heaven, and the common neceſſaries of life. Jacob enters into an holy covenant with his Maker, in conſequence of the gracious promiſes he had juſt before received. He expreſſes no doubt of the truth of theſe promiſes, but thankfully accepts them. Learned men have obſerv'd, that the paſſage would have been better rendered, SINCE *God will be with me*, &c. But ſhould it be granted, that there is ſomething conditional implied, yet ſurely no one, without very ſtrong prejudices

judices about him, can ſee any thing *impiouſly intereſted and craving*.

10. The different ſenſes, in which ſome paſſages of the Old Teſtament may be taken, will create no difficulty, nor render either their authority, or their meaning, dubious. They may be conceived to be at the ſame time hiſtorical, and typical or prophetical, and to be true both in a literal and allegorical ſenſe. Nay, on the ſuppoſition of inſpiration, it is very eaſy to imagine, that the Holy Spirit might ſometimes have more diſtant views than the penmen of Scripture. Points, which were no way neceſſary for theſe to know, might be of great conſequence to be foretold to future ages. And in ſuch a caſe, it would be very unfair to ſay, that the penmen *did not know what they writ*, though they were not made acquainted with the whole ſcheme of Providence, or the whole intendment and deſign of their own predictions. I readily own, that we ſhould be cautious, how we indulge fancy or invention in aſſigning ſuch double ſenſes. But we are juſtified in doing ſo, when the event in the plaineſt and moſt ſtriking manner correſponds with the words, ſo that it cannot but be thought originally aimed at in them ... or when theſe are ſo interpreted and ap-

plied by ſubſequent writers, whom we have reaſon to think inſpired by the ſame ſpirit of truth.

11. *Let us make man* are, we know, words, which have been differently underſtood. But they are not *inconſiſtent with the Unity of the Godhead*, the truth of which is taught in almoſt every page of the Old Teſtament. Polytheiſm was, I believe, never before collected from them, or thought any conſequence of them, either by thoſe, who have applied them to the Perſons of the Trinity; or by others, who conſider this, as an honourable phraſe and manner of ſpeaking. Neither of them ſuppoſe any creature to be here called upon. And indeed, it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe the aſſiſtance of creatures uſed in the formation of man, when all the other parts of the creation are repreſented as made by God only.

12. The charge againſt Moſes as *teaching the creation of light, and the diſtinction between night and day, before the ſun, moon, and ſtars*, is an old one. Now, ſuppoſe that he did not here ſpeak with philoſophic accuracy, yet was it his deſign to teach philoſophy? Was he any more obliged to do this, than to *explain the Copernican ſyſtem?* Could ſuch a defect be any reflection upon him as an hiſtorian

hiſtorian or a deliverer of laws from God? No moſt certainly. We have heard Lord Bollingbroke ſuppoſing, that *the Sun* is *probably much older than our world*; which appears to break and diſſolve the general harmony and connection of the ſyſtem, which was eſtabliſhed at the beginning. Here then is an error much more unpardonable, than what we have been conſidering, ſuppoſing it to be one. And yet if the Volumes before me had contained nothing more inoffenſive, they had paſſed uncenſured.

However, it deſerves to be conſidered, whether this account of Moſes be ſo much as an error in philoſophy. To prove it ſuch, it muſt be proved, that no degree of light could poſſibly exiſt before, and out of, the ſun; * it muſt be proved that the elemental fire, of which the ſun is compoſed, and to which the idea of light is annexed, could not be called forth and ſeparated from the univerſal darkneſs and confuſion of the chaos, and continue in that ſtate ſome time, before it was formed into the ſolar globe; it muſt be proved that there is any impropriety in deſcribing this as the firſt act of creation, and

* On the contrary, there are ſaid to be now viſible in the firmament large lucid ſpaces, which receive not their light from the ſun, or any ſtars. See Phil. Tranſ. No. 347. p. 390. or Jones's abridgment, p. 225.

the ſun as produced afterwards...* And laſtly it muſt be proved, that there could be no meaſure of time but the ſun and moon; that this darkneſs and light thus parted from each other could not then conſtitute night and day, ſucceeding each other in the ſame ſpaces of time, as night and day now do, by the revolution of the earth on its own axis; and that Moſes could not without abſurdity make uſe of the terms night and day on this occaſion, as other words are frequently uſed and applied to ſimilar things by way of anticipation ... And yet, I humbly apprehend, that none of theſe negatives can be proved. Such niceties we may not be able to reach: and therefore the authority of Moſes will ſtand unimpeached.

AND thus much for Moſes and his writings. The eleventh head relates to *Jeſus Chriſt and his apoſtles*. And here his *Divine* and *human natures*, his unſpotted *innocence*, the excellence of his *preaching*, his *miracles*, his being *at leaſt the Meſſiah foretold by the*

* It is remarkable, that Moſes deſcribes the production of graſs, herbs, and trees, on the third day. Whereas the creation of the ſun was on the fourth. Hence an important concluſion follows, that the ſun was not, as many of the heathen thought it, the original cauſe of vegetation. And who can ſay, that this error, the parent of idolatry, might not be in the ſacred hiſtorian's thoughts, and be deſigned to be prevented by this account?

prophets,

prophets, his *authority ſuperior* to the natural and *Moſaical* law, his *ſending his diſciples to all nations, who eſtabliſhed his church among them*, who *worked miracles to prove their miſſion*, all this Lord Bolingbroke expreſsly acknowleges. And even St. Paul's doctrine he owns *agreeable to the laws of nature*, and his *goſpel in fundamentals the ſame as the other apoſtles*. Would not any one imagine from this account, that his Lordſhip was perfectly ſound and orthodox in his belief concerning the perſon, the offices, the works of our Lord? What more could any Chriſtian have owned in ſo ſhort a compaſs? Let me beg the cloſeſt attention to theſe parts of the Eſſays, let them be allowed their full and juſt influence on the mind; and there can be no danger from ſuch as the following.

St. Paul, in his Epiſtle to the Hebrews, ſhews great cabaliſtical ſkill about Melchiſedek, and grounds on ſuch forced alluſions as might paſs in the ſchool of Gamaliel, the leaſt concluſive reaſoning that was ever heard out of it. Vol. II. p. 182.

The Trinity not early reconciled to the Unity of God. p. 233.

Dr.

p. 281. Dr. Barrow talking in a theological cant more worthy of Paul, than of a man like him.

p. 306. A better ſyſtem of Ethics to be had from the heathen moraliſts, than from the Goſpels.

p. 308. The ſublime and peculiarly Chriſtian precepts never obſerved . . .

p. 309. . . . little conſiſtent with the law of nature.

p. 310. Duties enjoined in the ſermon on the mount by no means practicable in the general ſociety of mankind.

p. 328. The Goſpel of Chriſt one thing, of St, Paul another.

p. 330. Chriſt's Revelation not to be ſupplied by his Apoſtles, by Paul particularly.

p. 331. Theſe additions, though made by the ſame authority, make a change in the covenant.

p. 334. The intire plan of Divine wiſdom in the miſſion of Chriſt, and the redemption of man, not to be reduced to a coherent, intelligible, and reaſonable ſyſtem of doctrines and facts.

p. 337. Paul the author of a new Goſpel, as he in effect ſays of himſelf.

p. 341. The myſtery of calling the Gentiles inconſiſtent with the declarations and practice of Chriſt.

St.

St. Paul a looſe paraphraſer, a cabaliſtical commentator, as much at leaſt as any ancient or modern Rabbin . . . the father of artificial theology. p. 346.

Teach all nations, means only the Jews diſperſed in all nations. p. 347.

Inſpiration ſufficient to keep St. Paul from falling into thoſe faults, want of order and perſpicuity, into which none but the meaneſt of uninſpired writers are apt to fall . . . His Goſpel, where it is intelligible, is often abſurd, or profane or trifling. Witneſs paſſive obedience, and abſolute predeſtination . . . and the woman's praying with her head covered. p. 351; p. 352.

The Meſſiah intended rather to reform and to graft upon Judaiſm, than to aboliſh it. Vol. II. p. 376.

As the heathens took notions of mediation and interceſſion, ſo they took others of atonement and expiation, from the characters of men, and of governments. p. 407.

Paul was no diſciple . . . received nothing immediately from Chriſt. Vol. III. p. 16.

St. Paul charged with impudence on account of his Revelations. p. 28.

Leſs than the whole would not ſatisfy the Church: and St. Peter accuſes them accordingly of fraud and of lying to the Holy Ghoſt; p. 60.

Ghoſt; becauſe they had given no more than they could ſpare.

p. 98. St. Paul's extraordinary vocation known to none but himſelf.

p. 146. Peter and Paul called inconſiſtent writers.

p. 148. Two conſubſtantial perſons, as the Father and Son, cannot be intelligibly diſtinguiſhed from one another; and it is of the utmoſt abſurdity to advance, that the ſame Perſon intercedes with himſelf.

p. 149. The orthodox doctrine of the Trinity was never taught explicitly and poſitively by any Divine authority.

p. 151. Various Scriptures and traditions in the primitive ages depoſed againſt the Trinity.

p. 155. It was impoſſible to ſhew, by any ſubtlety of logic, that this doctrine was not polytheiſtical; ſince the admiſſion of three, or three hundred Gods, is equally ſo.

p. 160. The Nicene Council ſuppoſed to conſiſt of 2048, of which only 318 were unanimous in declaring the Divinity of Chriſt.

p. 174. Abſolute predeſtination, though diſputed by ſome, is held in general to be orthodox.

p. 221. Chriſt ſcarce ſhewed himſelf to the few, who were ſaid to have ſeen him, in ſuch a manner as they could know by it, certainly, that it was he whom they had ſeen .... St. Paul deſerves no credit, when he affirms,

againſt

againſt the whole tenor of the Goſpels, that he and above five hundred brethren at once had ſeen him after his reſurrection. Both theſe events, the reſurrection and aſcenſion, paſſed in a very private manner. There were no witneſſes, properly called ſo, of his reſurrection. There were few of his aſcenſion.

The Trinity and many other great points of Chriſtian faith firſt taught or determined ſeveral ages after the immediate diſciples of Chriſt were dead. p. 313.

I dare not uſe theological familiarity, and talk of imitating God. p. 388.

All the ends of matrimony anſwered by one man having ſeveral wives. Vol. IV. p. 109.

Though not by one woman's having ſeveral huſbands. p. 110.

A well-ordered polygamy cauſed a prodigious increaſe of people. p. 112.

Provides the moſt effectual means for the generation and education of children . . . Yet immediately after it is owned, that monogamy will unite the care of both parents in breeding up ſubjects of the commonwealth. p. 113.

Without divorces, monogamy is an abſurd, unnatural, and cruel impoſition. p. 119.

Ill management of family affairs, or an p. 121.

an

an intolerable and incurable ill humor, good reaſons ſurely for divorces.

p. 125. Inceſtuous marriages not prohibited by the law of nature.

p. 129. If natural law does not directly prohibit conjunctions between parents and children, it does not permit them neither in ſo full a manner, as to give them that ſanction, which other marriages called inceſtuous have.

p. 171. Neither reaſon nor experience will lead us to enquire what propitiation God will accept.

p. 268. Our ideas of moral attributes will lead us to think, that God would have been ſatiſfied more agreeably to his mercy and goodneſs, without any expiation, upon the repentance of the offenders, and more agreeably to his juſtice, with any other expiation, rather than with that of his ſon.

Vol.IV. p. 269. The niceſt caſuiſt would be puzzled by reconciling the notion of fitneſs, and the innocence and the death of Chriſt.

p. 273. But nothing in the reaſon of the thing, nor in the moſt ſuperſtitious of their prejudices, could lead the heathens to imagine ſo much rigor in one God, as to exact that another ſhould be ſacrificed even by men, who meaned no expiation, and in whom it was a murder, not a ſacrifice; nor ſo much humility

humility and condeſcenſion in another, as to make him ſubmit to be this Divine victim.

The vague and undetermined ſenſe, and the ambiguous dark expreſſion, of the Bible, have led ſacred writers and others to ſuppoſe prophecies applicable to Chriſt, when none ſuch were intended. p. 285.

The love of God to man, in ſending his Son to die for him, will appear partiality as great, as that which the Jews aſſumed that he had ſhewn in preferring their nation to all the nations of the earth. This juſtice will appear injuſtice in all the circumſtances of the fall, and in the redemption of man by the propitiatory ſacrifice of an innocent perſon. This goodneſs will appear cruelty, when it is conſidered, that the propitiation was made by tormenting, and ſpilling the blood of the victim: And in ſhort, injuſtice and cruelty will appear inconſiſtently united in this circumſtance, that mankind could not have been redeemed, if the Jews had received, inſtead of crucifying, the Meſſiah; and yet that they were rejected then, and have been puniſhed ever ſince, for not receiving, and for crucifying him. Vol. V. p. 175.

THE reader has here a very different face of things, from that before exhibited. And

the one is a perfect contradiction to the other. If the former character of our Lord and his apoſtles be true, this latter is both falſe and injurious. But to come to particulars.

1. St. Paul we find ſpoken againſt in terms of great bitterneſs and reproach. But I ſhall take notice of nothing alleged againſt him, which has not the appearance of ſome foundation. General accuſations and cenſures can hurt only thoſe who uſe them ... In order to ſhew, that our Saviour's prieſthood was ſuperior to the Levitical, he quotes a paſſage of the Old Teſtament, which declares him an eternal prieſt after the order of Melchiſedek, who was different from, and prior to, Aaron, both with regard to time and dignity. And he obſerves, that this Melchiſedek, according to the deſcription of him in the book of Geneſis, was like unto the Son of God, and a proper forerunner, pattern, and type of him. In all this there is nothing *forced* or *cabaliſtical*. The account is true, and the reaſoning ſtrictly concluſive. There is nothing aſſumed, but that the text, "Thou art a prieſt for ever," &c. relates to the Meſſiah, which at that time, we may preſume, was not doubted, and which at this time cannot be diſproved, indeed

deed cannot be differently applied, agreeably to the rules of ſound criticiſm. Therefore the concluſion from hence is fairly drawn.

St. Paul's Goſpel being allowed to be *in fundamentals the ſame as the other apoſtles*, will, I hope, on ſecond thoughts be alſo allowed to be the ſame with that of Chriſt. For how ſhall we know what Chriſt's Goſpel was, but from the writings of the apoſtles?

Chriſt told his diſciples before his death, that "he had many things to ſay, which "they could not bear then, but that he "would ſend them the Spirit to lead "them into all truth." We cannot therefore be ſurprized, if ſome doctrines ſhould be more fully taught and explained in the Epiſtles, than they were by Chriſt in his life-time; and if ſome others, not mentioned by him, ſhould be inſiſted upon therein. This may be called *ſupplying* or compleating his revelation, *i. e.* what he had perſonally revealed before his death. But ſtill the whole is his revelation, and publiſhed by his authority. And if the other apoſtles had power to do this, why muſt St. Paul be particularly excepted, whoſe call was miraculous, who received his doctrine immediately from Chriſt, and whoſe writings are as fully authenticated as

any of the Goſpels themſelves? The relation of his extraordinary vocation, great labours, and many miracles, we have from Luke, whoſe authority is indiſputable; and the high and deſerved regard, which has always been paid him by the wiſeſt and greateſt of men, is not to be ſhook at this diſtance of time by bare aſſertions and groundleſs ſurmiſes.... Nor is it true, that *theſe additions* made by St. Paul and the other apoſtles, *make* any *change in the covenant.* They are no way repugnant to any part of this made known before. The covenant was not perfected without them. They are ſuppoſed to come from the ſame authority from which the terms of it before revealed came; and therefore rightly claim the ſame attention and belief.

I cannot tell what paſſage our noble writer had in his eye, when he affirmed, that *Paul in effect ſays of himſelf*, that he was *the author of a new Goſpel.* * Nor can I reconcile this with

* If it be thought, that the texts alluded to are Rom. ii. 16. xvi. 25. 2 Tim. ii. 8. in all which the phraſe *according to my Goſpel* is uſed; we may aſk, how does this phraſe denote a *new Goſpel?* In all theſe places this is evidently applied to ſuch doctrines as are common to all the Goſpels, viz. to the reſurrection of Chriſt, and his coming to judgment, and the Divine power of ſtabliſhing Chriſtians in the faith. And throughout all his Epiſtles, St. Paul ſo uniformly repreſents his doctrine, and that of the other apoſtles, as the ſame, that one can hardly ſuppoſe theſe texts to be the

with what his Lordſhip allowed, that his Goſpel was fundamentally the ſame with the other apoſtles.

Want of order and perſpicuity are next objected to him; which complaint has been by thoſe, who have been moſt converſant in his writings, thought more owing to the careleſſneſs and inattention of his readers. No one however can ſay, that ſo much as the appearance of that want is general. The main of his writings are clear and beautiful, as well as uſeful; and if any part be otherwiſe, it only proves, that the guidance under which he wrote extended not to his ſtile, but merely to his ſentiments.

No, *his Goſpel is often abſurd, profane, or trifling.* How is this, when it is granted, that he *does not preſcribe any thing directly oppoſite to the law of nature, as the command of God to man.* What room then for any abſurdity or profaneneſs? Does not that conceſſion imply that no falſe article is delivered as from God... But inſtances are given. *Paſſive obedience, and abſolute predeſtination.* But we ſhould be very ſure, that theſe doctrines, in their ill ſenſe, were taught by him; or elſe it will be very unfair to impute to him all the errors

the only foundation of ſo flatly contradicting and miſrepreſenting him. And yet we may deny the greateſt of Lord Bolingbroke's admirers to produce any others or better.

and wrong concluſions, which have been grounded on his writings. Predeſtination is, I think, repreſented by St. Paul, as relating to privileges of nations in this world, not rewards of particular perſons in the next; or when to the latter, as depending on the Divine foreknowlege of their behaviour. In theſe lights it may well be admitted: at leaſt, it doth not include abſolute unconditional reprobation; which doctrine is far from being *held in general to be orthodox*. In ſhort, Lord Bolingbroke well knew, that Mr. Locke and others had done juſtice to St. Paul in this particular, by explaining his meaning at large. But though he could not diſprove what they had ſaid, he was not in the leaſt inclined to let go ſo favourite a topic of accuſation.

As to the other article, St. Paul does indeed inſiſt upon ſubjection to the higher powers, and denounces damnation to thoſe who reſiſt them. And from hence many wild and unwarrantable notions have been raiſed, for which he is no way anſwerable. He may be ſuppoſed to have laid down a general rule of very great conſequence, without putting caſes, and making exceptions; which reaſon and nature will never fail to provide for, whenever they happen, and which it may be of no

good

good ſervice to communities to point out particularly beforehand. And he preſcribes obedience to the powers that be, to the Supreme power of every nation, without determining in whoſe hands this ſhould be lodged. And without obedience of this kind, it is difficult to ſay what government can ſubſiſt. Obſerve farther, that the principles, which the apoſtle of the Gentiles builds this duty upon, are in a great meaſure granted by his Lordſhip. Vol. IV. p. 62, 63, he ſays, *governments are inſtituted by virtue of the law of our nature, and are in this ſenſe of Divine appointment .... There muſt be an abſolute power in every civil ſociety placed ſomewhere.*

The other exception againſt St. Paul is taken from what he ſays about the woman's praying with her head covered; which is repreſented as trifling. But ſurely, if at this time of day we cannot give a clear and perfect account of this reaſoning, we might conſider this as a matter of very little moment: Our inability will not affect the apoſtle's character, or leſſen the authority and uſefulneſs of his writings. If we will meaſure all ancient works by modern ſtandards, and make no allowance for the different cuſtoms which prevail in different times

and places; there is hardly any old writer, nay any modern one far removed from us, which will not, in ſome particular or other, equally lie under the charge of trifling. St. Paul's Epiſtles, though deſigned for the uſe of the church in all ages, were immediately wrote for thoſe to whom they were ſent. And inſpiration, though it will always guard againſt error, may frequently leave the genius at liberty to give directions of ſmaller, as well as greater moment; and to inforce them in ſuch manner, as any preſent circumſtances require. We muſt then expect that ſuch perſon will of courſe write according to the habits and manners of the age. Let us then take theſe particulars along with us; that among thoſe to whom St. Paul wrote, things were different from what they are now; bare heads were looked upon as a ſign of dominion; and it was a diſgrace for women to be ſhaven and to appear without a veil; and we ſhall have a better opinion of this direction, that men ſhould pray or prophecy with their heads uncovered, but women the contrary, in token of their ſubjection. The apoſtle is arguing from what was then eſteemed decent or comely, which they, to whom he wrote, were judges of; and in points naturally indifferent,

different, cuſtom and general opinion is the rule to judge by. Nor was it at all needleſs or trifling to give orders of this nature: Minute as they may appear to us, they might be highly proper to prevent offences among Chriſtians, or unjuſt prejudices againſt the church, then in her infancy. And the early character which St. Paul's writings obtained, ſhews this to have been the caſe, and the ſenſe of wiſe and good men then.

2. Let us next conſider, what Lord Bolingbroke ſays on the ſubject of the Trinity. We have ſeen him owning, repeatedly owning, the Divinity of the Son. He rightly obſerves, that *Sabellianiſm gave occaſion to Arianiſm*; men imprudently running into one extreme, to avoid another. And it would be very difficult to give an account of the riſe of Sabellianiſm, if the doctrine of the Trinity was not then eſteemed to be the doctrine of Scripture. Men would never have thought of confounding the Divine Perſons, if theſe had not been believed to be equal in nature.... If this noble writer was in earneſt when he made the above conceſſions, the objections againſt this doctrine as *polytheiſtical*, and all his miſrepreſentations of it, muſt come from him with a very ill grace. Orthodox perſons believe the

the Unity of God as firmly as poſſible; tho' they humbly and modeſtly decline explaining the manner how the Bleſſed Three are One God; as knowing this point to be abſolutely and neceſſarily incomprehenſible. But to allow the Son to be God, as well as the Father, and yet to charge this doctrine as teaching two Gods, both which his Lordſhip doth, is entirely inconſiſtent with any belief of the Divine Unity. Since *the admiſſion of* two *or* two *hundred is equally polytheiſtical.*

Two conſubſtantial perſons, his Lordſhip ſays, *cannot be intelligibly diſtinguiſhed from one another.* If he means, that our underſtanding is not equal to this myſtery, and that the manner of this diſtinction cannot be perfectly explained to us, he is right; but this ſhould be no objection, as we find him allowing myſteries. But if he means, that the reality of this diſtinction cannot be made known to us, the aſſertion is falſe and preſuming. A diſtinction between the Father and the Son, correſponding to theſe two words, is plainly revealed in Scripture. He has owned them both to be God: And this is all we underſtand by the word conſubſtantial.

Who

Who now ſays, the *ſame perſon intercedes with himſelf?* This is no part of the orthodox ſcheme, nor is it held, that I know of, by any Chriſtian.

As to the truth and antiquity of the doctrine of the Trinity, this has been diſcuſſed at large; and cannot be overthrown by poſitive aſſertions; and nothing more is here advanced.

A ſolemn confutation of that wild and palpably abſurd ſuppoſition, concerning the number of perſons compoſing the Nicene council, would be little leſs than ridiculous. An Arabick MS is here preferred, againſt all probability and common ſenſe, to all the authentic accounts of cotemporary writers, who were a part of this council themſelves. This MS is left by Eutychius, who lived in the ninth century, and on which Mr. Selden wrote a commentary: But this learned author himſelf obſerves, that it does not appear from whence Eutychius had this account. He indeed mentions two other aſſertors of the ſame, one Joſephus, an Egyptian Preſbyter, who wrote in Arabic (according to Selden A. D 1400) and a Mahometan writer; neither of whom are publiſhed, nor is the age of the laſt mentioned

tioned by Selden. Com. in Eutych. Orig. N°. 16.*

3. If *Chriſt taught the duties of natural religion with evangelical ſimplicity*; if he *was the greateſt of preachers*; if his deciſion about divorces *had a right to be* more reſpected *than the natural and Moſaical law, among Chriſtians*, all which is granted; then the following aſſertions muſt undeniably be falſe, that *a better ſyſtem of ethics is to be had from the heathen moraliſts, than from the Goſpels . . . that the ſublime and peculiarly Chriſtian precepts are little conſiſtent with the law of nature . . . that ſome duties enjoyned in the ſermon on the mount* are *by no means practicable in the general ſociety of mankind*† . . . that, to *talk of imitating God*, which Chriſt certainly en-

* See Cave, who ſays, that in Eutychius's Annals, certe plurima anilibus fabulis ſimillima, quæ ſi non ex proprio cerebello finxerit, ſaltem ex futilibus Eccleſiæ ſuæ monumentis hauſit. Hiſt. Literar.

† The chief duties here meant are thoſe mentioned Matth. v. 39, 40, 41. where our Lord, to keep his diſciples as far as poſſible from the principles and practices of retaliation and revenge, which had prevailed among the Jews, enjoins them rather to bear ſome ſupportable loſſes, and to put up ſome ſlight injuries, nay to venture the repetition of ſuch, than either privately to puniſh them, or to be rigorous in taking every advantage of proſecuting them in a legal manner. And ſurely equity and patience, forgiveneſs, and even prudence itſelf, will not only juſtify, but ſtrongly recommend, ſuch precepts. Neither are they impracticable, nor inconſiſtent with ſociety, or the defending any rights of importance, See Grotius on the place.

joined,

joined, and which is owned to be *among the moſt refined precepts of Chriſtian morality*, is *theological familiarity*... that one man, Vol. IV. p. 109. *may have ſeveral wives*... that *without divorces*, which ſhould be granted *for ill management or ill humour*, *monogamy is an abſurd, unnatural, and cruel impoſition*.... that *inceſtuous marriages are not contrary to the law of* nature, not even thoſe *between parents and children directly prohibited* thereby, but others *have a ſanction from thence*.† The contradictions here cannot but be ſeen by every one. And the looſeneſs of the caſuiſtry, which appears in theſe latter paſſages muſt ſtrike every ſober mind with aſtoniſhment and abhorrence, and inſpire him with an high regard for the oppoſite and pure morals of the Goſpels. I ſhall only add one remark on what is ſaid about a *well ordered polygamy*. It has been diſputed, whether this cauſes a prodigious in-

† If it be ſaid, that at the beginning the children of Adam muſt be ſuppoſed to have been joined together, there being no other way of peopling the world: we may anſwer, that what happened then through mere neceſſity can give no ſanction to ſuch practices now; which are not only void of any ſuch pretence, but highly unſuitable to the preſent condition of men, as multiplied on the earth; and therefore moſt contrary to the law of nature and reaſon... Nor will this excuſe at all extend to the caſe of parents and children... But, I hope, bad as the world is, there is no need of convincing them of the iniquity and unnaturalneſs of inceſt.

creaſe

creaſe of people. The contrary has been, I think, ſhewn; and the near equality between the number of males and females, which I believe prevails every where, ſeems to decide the point. But if we grant this, how will it *provide the moſt effectual means for the education of children?* Will it not be a means of dividing the man's affections, and leſſening his ſubſtance? And is not *the united care of both parents in breeding up ſubjects of the commonwealth*, which is owned to be the *effect of monogamy*, a moſt conſiderable advantage towards their right education?

4. How could Lord Bolingbroke, who allowed the Divine Miſſion, Meſſiahſhip, and miracles of Chriſt, allow himſelf to ſay, that *the entire plan of Divine wiſdom in the Miſſion of Chriſt, and the redemption of man, is not to be reduced to a coherent, intelligible, and reaſonable ſyſtem of doctrines and facts?* Why would he thus inconſiſtently throw down with the one hand, what he had ſo well built up with the other? No credit ſurely can be given to ſuch a general and crude reflection, in oppoſition to what his better judgment taught him. Nor doth it require any other than this general anſwer, that Divine Wiſdom muſt appear in what

God

God has done and confirmed both by prophecies and miracles. And the incoherency is not in the entire plan of this, but in the plan of theſe philoſophical eſſays.

5. It may be thought a point of no great conſequence to diſpute, from whence *the heathens took* their *notions of mediation and interceſſion, of atonement and expiation. From the characters of men and governments*, ſays his Lordſhip. But how does the whole of this appear? That bloody ſacrifices were uſed and reſted in by them, cannot be doubted. But what governments ever appointed theſe to expiate any rebellion or other crimes committed againſt themſelves? The offender in theſe caſes was doomed to dye. And if he was pardoned, though it might ſometimes be on account of ſome powerful interceſſion made for him; yet what inſtance is there of his being required, in order to his pardon, to ſacrifice ſome beaſt in his ſtead, as was continually done, in order to appeaſe the Divine anger, or to procure ſome favour from heaven? In ſhort, theſe notions and cuſtoms could not proceed from any practices of civil communities; but they have their original in a conſciouſneſs of guilt, a juſt ſenſe of the connection between guilt and puniſhment, and a deſire to eſcape puniſhment by means,

which

which univerſal tradition had taught them. Indeed our noble author ſays, that *neither reaſon nor experience will lead us to enquire what propitiation God will accept.* But this is contrary to all reaſon and experience too. A deſire of pardon muſt be natural: A ſolicitude to know on what terms this will be vouchſafed, is equally ſo: An aſſurance, that we ſhall be pardoned without any propitiation, is more than ſinners can receive, and more than ever was entertained. Accordingly all nations of the world have been concerned about this matter, and have had recourſe to ſome expiation.

6. We are told farther, that *our ideas of moral attributes will lead us to think, that God would have been ſatisfied, more agreeably to his mercy and goodneſs, without any expiation, upon the repentance of the offenders, and more agreeably to his juſtice, with any other expiation, rather than that of his Son.* I am glad to find the moral attributes argued from, (tho' with an ill grace by a writer who elſewhere rejects this ſort of argument) and ſhall take the ſame liberty of arguing from them, in my turn; only let us not divide them. Let us conſider, not what is agreeable to God's goodneſs, and to his juſtice, ſeparately, but what is agreeable to them both. Is it

then

then moſt agreeable to Divine mercy and juſtice, I may add, to Divine wiſdom and truth, to pardon with or without expiation? Which of theſe different proceedings beſt ſecures the laws and authority of God from violation and contempt? Which is moſt ſuitable to the high character of moral Governor of the world? Which moſt comforts the penitent, and encourages him to future duty? That, which does all this, is not only moſt juſt, but moſt merciful and good. And ſurely, a ſufficient expiation has in theſe reſpects an high advantage over bare repentance, ſuch imperfect repentance as ours eſpecially: And expreſs promiſes grounded upon an expiation, the only promiſes of pardon which God ever made, muſt give much greater comfort, than the ſlender hopes which nature could afford, and which may be ſuppoſed to be balanced by at leaſt equal fears. Thus the Divine attributes are beſt reconciled, and the reaſon and wiſhes of the offender ſatisfied.

7. Let us next enquire, whether any other expiation be more agreeable to God's juſtice and goodneſs than that of his Son. In affirming this we may eaſily miſtake; and it will become us to be contented with, and thankful for, the favours we have received,

without objecting againſt the manner in which they are conferred. That the perſon who makes this expiation, does it voluntarily; that he be innocent; dear to God; and that the ſacrifice be meritorious in his ſight; all this is neceſſary, and it is ſufficient to qualify him for this office, and to diſplay God's juſtice and goodneſs. The more excellent and exalted the perſon is, the better the reverence of God's laws is ſecured; the more fully is hatred againſt ſin ſhewn; and the more conſpicuouſly is his love and good will to us manifeſted. And can we then conceive any expiation equal to that of the Son of God, or object to it as diſagreeable to theſe attributes?

But the *notion of fitneſs*, and his *innocency and death*, are ſaid to be *irreconcileable*. This would be the caſe, if death was inflicted as a puniſhment on him, or if he had not conſented to it. But if he conſented to bear the ſins of the world, the fitneſs of this diſpenſation can *puzzle no caſuiſt* whatever.

Nothing indeed, *in the reaſon of the thing*, *could lead* any one *to imagine* the doctrine of propitiation by the Son of God. Much leſs has *ſuperſtition* or *prejudice* here any place. So far we readily agree. But as to the *rigor and exaction* of *one God*, and the *humility*

and

and condeſcenſion of the other, as our author chuſes to expreſs himſelf; what he ſays of the former is a groſs miſrepreſentation of goodneſs connected with juſtice and wiſdom: And the other is indeed love incomprehenſible, but truly adorable. The account above will ſhew the reaſons, why ſome Redeemer was needful and accepted.

I profeſs myſelf utterly unable to conſider the laſt extract under this head without terror. Here the death of Chriſt for man, which is the doctrine of Chriſt himſelf in the goſpel, is ſet forth as *partiality, injuſtice, and cruelty.* Theſe are hard words to be uſed againſt a ſcheme proved by the cleareſt miracles: But they are words only: There is no ſort of argument to ſupport them. This *love* is ſaid to *appear partiality as great, as that which the Jews aſſumed, that* God *had ſhewn in preferring their nation to all the nations of the earth.* But how are theſe things parallel? Is Chriſt ſuppoſed to have died for one nation only? or for the faithful and penitent in all? Partiality to theſe ſure is juſt and right: And no other can I find in the Goſpel ſcheme.

Indeed, his Lordſhip ſeems to think, that *the Meſſiah intended to reform and graft upon Judaiſm*; that *the myſtery of calling*

the Gentiles is *inconſiſtent with* his *declarations and practice*; that when he commanded his diſciples to teach *all nations*, he *means only the Jews diſperſed in all nations* . . . But this is all *gratis dictum*. The nature of the goſpel revelation contradicts it: This was deſigned for univerſal benefit: Several ſpeeches of Chriſt contradict it; as, "other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold," &c. The hiſtory of the acts, and the practice of the Apoſtles, contradict it. And ſurely all theſe deſerve more credit, than an affirmation grounded on nothing more, than Chriſt's preaching in his own perſon to the Jews only, and making the firſt offers to this people. This partiality then is only ſuppoſed. The love of God in ſending his ſon is truly univerſal.

Neither is there any *injuſtice in the circumſtances of the fall*, nor *in the redemption of man by the ſacrifice of an innocent perſon*. Theſe things have been already conſidered. I will only add, that if our Redeemer had not been innocent, he could not have made a ſufficient propitiation for us.

But we are told *this goodneſs will appear cruelty*, in that the propitiation *was made by tormenting and ſpilling the blood of the victim*. All propitiations have been made

ſo:

ſo: Whether any could have been made otherwiſe, we cannot preſume to ſay, and are no proper judges. However, this is no more cruelty than injuſtice; as our Lord freely conſented, and ever bleſſed be his name for conſenting, to undergo this torment and death: Which might be intended, not only to ſet forth the greatneſs of his love and condeſcenſion to us; but to convince us of the heinouſneſs of our guilt, of the puniſhment we had incurred, and of the puniſhment which we ſtill deſerve, if we continue therein.

Next, we have a complicated charge of *inconſiſtence*, *injuſtice*, and *cruelty*; but formed on the weakeſt foundation, viz. the *Jews being rejected for crucifying the Meſſiah, without which men could not have been redeemed.* Now, we cannot in common modeſty ſay, that infinite wiſdom could not eaſily have found out other means of offering the atonement, than by the inſtrumentality of the Jews. However, all that can be collected from hence, is, that God makes uſe of wicked men to accompliſh his own great and good deſigns, and yet puniſhes them for their wickedneſs. We have all reaſon to think he does the ſame in many other inſtances; whether by any other means than foreknowlege and permiſſion, I pre-

ſume not to ſay. But however inſcrutable any parts of his moral government may be, without doubt, " he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

8. I need not anſwer the noble author's ſtrange account of the conduct of Ananias and Sapphira, and the judgement inflicted on them by the hands of St. Peter. * This awful circumſtance ſhould methinks have prevented the wantonneſs of his Lordſhip's pen. But the hiſtory is in every one's hands: We may truſt the meaneſt reader with this groſs abuſe and miſrepreſentation of it: No one can be impoſed upon by it, unleſs wilfully.

9. There

* To prevent the reader's trouble in turning to the place, I ſhall here ſet down the words. " Ananias with " Sapphira his wife ſold a poſſeſſion, and kept back part " of the price, his wife alſo being privy to it, and brought " a certain part, and laid it at the Apoſtles feet;" pretending it was the whole. Part of St. Peter's expoſtulation was, " whilſt it remained was it not thine own? And after " it was ſold, was it not in thine own power?" This ſhews, that his dedication of his ſubſtance was entirely voluntary, and that he might, if he had pleaſed, have innocently kept the whole. But by giving only a part, and aſſerting it to be the whole, he was not only guilty of a ſolemn lie, and an attempt to mock God, but a direct and intended fraud. For a competent and proportionable diſtribution of the whole money contributed was made by the Apoſtles. He therefore, by having pretended to give the whole, would expect to live upon the common dividend; and, conſidering what he had reſerved, might have been unjuſtly a gainer by his ſeeming bounty . . . This is the true account: And I muſt leave it now to the reader to conſider, how very unfair and profane a turn his Lordſhip has given to this paſſage.

9. There remains now only one particular under this head to ſpeak to; but this a particular of great conſequence indeed: It is levelled againſt Chriſt's reſurrection and aſcenſion. Now, as his miſſion and the Goſpels are true, and they are allowed by his Lordſhip to be true, theſe prime articles are unconteſtable. But *both theſe events* are ſaid to have *paſſed in a very private manner. There were few witneſſes of* the latter. The eleven diſciples at leaſt were witneſſes of it, according to all the accounts we have. And ſure theſe are a ſufficient number to atteſt ſo open a fact. But *there were no witneſſes, properly ſpeaking, of his reſurrection.* Yes, the watch were ſo: As indeed were all that ſaw him after he was riſen. For nothing can be clearer, than that the event here proves the miracle. Every one, who ſaw him dead, and afterwards alive, were as properly witneſſes of his being riſen, had as good ſatisfaction of the truth of this fact, and were as capable of declaring it to others, as if they had ſeen him in the very article of riſing... Well, but the perſons *ſaid to have ſeen him* were but *few.* This is plainly contradicting the Scripture without any reaſon. The Goſpels repreſent the women and the eleven Apoſtles, and Cleophas with the other who

went to Emmaus, as having received this favour. And St. Paul mentions himſelf and above five hundred bretheren, who at once had ſeen him. This the noble Lord knew; and therefore, to get rid of this teſtimony, he ſays, *St. Paul deſerves no credit, affirming* this *againſt the whole tenor of the goſpels.* But do the goſpels ſay one word to deny this fact? Do they ſay, that the Apoſtles *only* and a few women ſaw him? No, they are ſilent as to this circumſtance. St. Paul, who equally proved his commiſſion by miracles, and whoſe epiſtles are equally parts of the canon with the goſpels, adds this part of the hiſtory for our ſtronger confirmation. And can this, with the leaſt propriety, be ſaid to contradict their relations, or to be againſt the whole tenor of them? Does St. John contradict St. Matthew, by giving an account of ſome appearances of Chriſt, which this evangeliſt had omitted? One is aſhamed to anſwer ſuch mere cavils... Laſtly, *Chriſt ſcarce ſhewed himſelf... in ſuch a manner, as they could know by it, certainly, that it was he whom they had ſeen.* However cautiouſly this be worded, it is moſt untrue, and flatly contrary to what the goſpels teach. If appearing frequently to the perſons, who of all others knew him beſt, converſing with them,

them, eating and drinking before them, ſuffering them to handle him, and one of them, more incredulous than the reſt, to feel the print of the wounds he had received at his crucifixion; if all this would not give certain information of the reality and identity of his perſon; it will be impoſſible to ſay, how ſufficient ſatisfaction could in a ſuch a caſe be had.

THUS feeble in all its parts is our noble writer's attack againſt this fundamental truth, this corner ſtone, of our religion. Let us proceed to what he ſays of *the truth, perfection, and uſefulneſs of Chriſtianity.* The ſum of his conceſſions collected under the twelfth head is as follows. *Genuine Chriſtianity is contained in the Goſpels,* and is the *word of God* ... it is a *perfect diſpenſation .. ſtands examinations ... has all the proofs it can have ...* was *eſtabliſhed by miracles and ſufferings ... ſpread beyond the bounds of the Roman empire in three centuries ...* is in every point *conformable to the law of nature ...* is a *continued leſſon of the ſtricteſt morality ... ſupplied all that was wanting in the philoſophers ... contributed to deſtroy polytheiſm and idolatry ... moſt tends to promote the peace and happineſs of mankind ... makes the law of right reaſon ſtrictly a law ..*

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is a *compleat ſyſtem to all the purpoſes of religion . . .* is *ſupported by ſanctions of future rewards and puniſhments.*

All theſe encomiums are ſtrictly true; and ſurely they ſhould make us, as lovers of truth, of private and of ſocial good, gladly and ſtedfaſtly hold faſt our Chriſtian profeſſion, without being ſhaken by any objections, which can be raiſed againſt it; remembering that nothing is ſo true, or ſo perfect, as to have eſcaped clear of all difficulties and objections.

Let us now hear what is advanced by the ſame perſon on the other ſide.

Vol. II. p. 235. Revelation has had no better ſucceſs than reaſon.

p. 259. When we conſider the great and glorious purpoſes of this revelation . . . we are ready to conclude, that ſuch a revelation muſt have left reaſon nothing to do, muſt have forced conviction, and have taken away even the poſſibility of doubt.

p. 270 If we had all the original proofs for and againſt our religion, though proofs would have been more abundant, the evidence would not have been greater, and we ſhould be puzzled as much by contradictory, as we are by ſcanty, proofs.

Divines

Divines are accuſed of madneſs for endeavouring to ſhew the reaſons and the connection of the Divine diſpenſations. p. 275.

The apoſtles, ſaints, and doctors of Chriſtianity have not had the power to reform the world. p. 304.

Such a motley crowd of Jews and heathens, as the firſt converts to Chriſtianity were, could not fail to mix a leaven of judaic and heathen theology into the Chriſtian ſyſtem. Vol. III. p. 24.

No monuments can be more uncertain, than thoſe of Chriſtian tradition. p. 32.

Theſe never more ſo than at firſt. p. 33.

Eccleſiaſtical tradition has been, from the firſt and pureſt ages, founded, for the moſt part, in ignorance, ſuperſtition, enthuſiaſm, and fraud. p. 39.

The ſcene of Chriſtianity has been always a ſcene of diſſenſion, of hatred, of perſecution, and of blood. p. 174.

The proof of Chriſtianity by miracles became, in a very little time, traditional and hiſtorical: and one might be allowed to wonder, how the effect of it continued, and increaſed too, as the force of it diminiſhed. Vol. IV. p. 23.

That the Chriſtian law is nothing elſe than the law of nature, enforced by a new revelation, every friend to Chriſtianity admits. p. 26.

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p. 240. The Chriſtian revelation has not effectually reformed the world. See the pages before and after, where it is contended, that the world has not been bettered by it.

p. 278. They, to whom the terms of the Chriſtian religion were communicated, might ſay, with ſound reaſon and the unprejudiced light of nature on their ſide, that theſe terms would have been communicated to all mankind alike, if the revelation had been from God; ſince all mankind were alike obliged to them, and ſince they to whom theſe terms had not been communicated, would dye, and might be damned, in their involuntary ignorance of them.

p. 342. Though our religion forbids pride, and teaches humility, yet the whole ſyſtem of it tends to inſpire the former into all thoſe, who are not able to diſcern the conſiſtency of particular precepts and of the ſyſtem, which I preſume that very few are ... The proofs of this are, our being ſaid to be made in the image of God, the final cauſe of the creation, and redeemed by his ſon.

Vol. V. p. 130. The Chriſtian notion of rewards and puniſhments repreſented, as if there will be no proportion obſerved between the various degrees of merit and demerit.

Chriſtianity

Chriſtianity preſerved in many reſpects a ſtrong tang of the ſpirit of Judaiſm. p. 173.

HOW very different is this repreſentation of our religion from the former? That contained many juſt and excellent things in its praiſe: The whole deſign of this is to diſhonor and diſgrace it. But in vain are all ſuch attempts, though made by the greateſt geniuſes in the world.

1. We cannot believe, that *revelation has had no better ſucceſs than reaſon* had; that *the world has not been bettered by Chriſtianity*; having been told by his Lordſhip, that *our Saviour found the whole world in a ſtate of error concerning the firſt principle of natural religion*; and that *the ſpreading of Chriſtianity has contributed to deſtroy polytheiſm and idolatry*. This, we know, unaſſiſted reaſon could not do. This I hope, is, in a great meaſure, reforming and bettering the world. Much has indeed been done towards mending it, by Chriſtianity. And if more has not been done effectually, ſtill this is the fault of men, who may deſpiſe or neglect the beſt rules of life and manners, and who cannot be forced into virtue and obedience; but it ſhould never be objected as a reproach to our religion, which contains every help and

advantage

advantage to this purpoſe, that any inſtitution can poſſibly have. Look back to the commendations, the high commendations, of its excellency and uſefulneſs, which we before extracted from the noble author, and we ſhall want no farther proof of this matter.

2. Indeed, in one place, we find his Lordſhip aſſerting, that *the whole ſyſtem of* our religion *tends to inſpire pride*, which muſt be owned to be a great root of evil, and fountain of miſchief, *into the greateſt part of Chriſtians.* But the inſtances brought in proof of this are not ſufficient to juſtify the aſſertion. It is no pride to acknowlege the real dignity of our nature, and the great bleſſings we have received from heaven. The conſideration of our reaſon and liberty, of our being the principal creature in this lower world, profited and ſerved by every thing round us, and much more, of our having been wonderfully redeemed from the power and guilt and puniſhment of our ſins by the condeſcenſion of the Son of God, muſt call forth our gratitude; and gratitude, eſpecially ſuch as binds us to acknowlege perpetually, that our deliverance from miſery, our power of acting right, our hope of future happineſs, are owing to the atonement, the grace, the mediation of Another,

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will ever be attended with humility. So that there is no ſort of difficulty in *diſcerning the conſiſtency of particular precepts, and the whole ſyſtem.* Both look one way: Every part of the law of nature is here inculcated and inforced. And the additional inſtitutions and doctrines (for ſurely no *friend to Chriſtianity* does or can *admit the Chriſtian law* to be *nothing elſe than the law of nature inforced by revelation)* contained in the Goſpels, directly tend to promote both public and private happineſs.

3. The vices of the world, under ſuch an admirable diſpenſation, are then a diſgrace to the perſons guilty of them, and much to be lamented. However, Lord Bolingbroke appears to have aggravated the matter much, when he ſays, *the ſcene of Chriſtianity has been always a ſcene of diſſenſion, of hatred, of perſecution, and of blood.* He cannot ſay, conſiſtently with his own declarations, that theſe evils are ever chargeable on Chriſtianity, which in the ſtricteſt manner forbids them. And ſome centuries paſt, before any other warmth, than that of an harmleſs and laudable zeal for the truths of their religion, was found among Chriſtians. In the early times, theſe were indeed expoſed to hatred and perſecution from their heathen enemies,

enemies, on account of their religion; but they were generally at union among themſelves. And in every age, the good influence of Chriſtianity, eſpecially where it is profeſſed in its purity, has appeared in the behaviour of very many; and the nobleſt fruits of concord, benevolence, and love, have ſprung from this ſound and happy root, far exceeding and overbalancing the inſtances of diſſenſion, &c.

4. The ſpeedy propagation, and amazing ſucceſs, of our religion, in the three firſt centuries, is acknowleged by his Lordſhip; who alſo owns, that the firſt preachers of it *eſtabliſhed it by their miracles and ſufferings*. And indeed by no other means was this poſſible to be done. Yet this does not ſeem to have ſatisfied him. He thinks, that all the circumſtances of this revelation conſidered, it *muſt have forced conviction, and have taken away even the poſſibility of doubt*. Something like this was alledged againſt the account of the miracles of Moſes, and the frequent defections of the Iſraelites. What was ſaid in anſwer to that plea, is applicable here. Conviction is not to be forced from beings created free. In matters of religion, prejudices and paſſions operate more ſtrongly, than they do in common ſubjects. Here it

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is but too uſual to withſtand the force both of reaſon and evidence. This was peculiarly viſible in our Saviour's time: And therefore the unbelief and oppoſition of the generality then, ought not to throw the leaſt ſuſpicion on the accounts of the Goſpels, any more than the unbelief of vain and wicked men can now, on the truth of Chriſtianity.

5. After we have ſeen Lord Bolingbroke owning the Chriſtian religion to have been eſtabliſhed by miracles, to be able to ſtand examination, to have been taught by God, to have all the proofs it could have; is it not ſurprizing to find him ſaying, that *we are now puzzled by ſcanty proofs*; and inſinuating, that there were ſome original proofs againſt it, which are loſt, and which would *contradict* what we have for it? How was it poſſible for him to know this laſt particular? There are no accounts of any thing of this ſort recorded; and the very ſucceſs of the Goſpel diſproves it. For if the facts on which it ſtands, could have been early contradicted, it muſt have been quaſhed at once.

6. But though *the proof by miracles was, no doubt, ſufficient for the converſion of thoſe who ſaw* them; yet we are told, it *became in a very little time traditional and hiſtorical; the force of it diminiſhed; no monuments can*

be more uncertain than thoſe of Chriſtian tradition; theſe never more ſo than at firſt; eccleſiaſtical tradition has been from the firſt and pureſt ages founded, for the moſt part, in ignorance, ſuperſtition, enthuſiaſm and fraud. Theſe are very ſevere words: And if they are true, we can have no dependance on the proof of Chriſtianity; nor had the firſt Chriſtians, who were not eye witneſſes of the miracles, and hearers of thoſe who worked them, any that is ſure and certain. And how then can Chriſtianity *require our veneration and ſtrict conformity*, as his Lordſhip allows it does?

I have ſpoken before about the diminiſhing of traditionary proof; and have now only to add a word or two in vindication of the written traditions of eccleſiaſtical writers, concerning the books of Scripture, and the original miracles. They are very far from deſerving the dreadful character, which his Lordſhip has thought proper, but without any proof, to beſtow upon them. They are handed down from time to time by the moſt conſiderable Chriſtians in their reſpective ages, who had all aſſurances of the truth, and many of whom ſealed their veracity by martyrdom. They were received by the whole body of Chriſtians, and uncontradicted by heathens.

heathens. Nor will a few miſtakes in other matters deſtroy their evidence.

7. That all the Divine diſpenſations are quite reaſonable and connected, muſt in general be affirmed. Reaſon, the law, and the Goſpel, we have cauſe, with his Lordſhip's allowance, to think Divine diſpenſations. Where the uſes, intents, and harmony of theſe can be made appear; as indeed they may be made appear plainly in many particulars, this is a point, which it is very ſuitable to the profeſſion of the clergy, and very much to the credit of the religion they teach, to endeavour to ſhew and explain. And if at any time they ſhould fail in any part of this attempt, I muſt humbly preſume, that ſuch endeavour is quite laudable in them; and that they ought not to be *accuſed*, much leſs in general to be *accuſed, of madneſs* on this account.

8. Some miſrepreſentations of our religion occur next to our notice. *The firſt converts* to it, being *Jews and Chriſtians*, muſt have *mixed it with Judaic and heathen theology*. But, as this muſt have been in the times of the apoſtles and firſt preachers of the goſpel; theſe, it may be ſuppoſed, had both power and will to preſerve it free from all material errors. It is from their writings,

that we form our judgement of genuine Chriſtianity: And therefore, whatever the private notions of any of their diſciples might have been, we have ſufficient means to diſcover them, and guard againſt them *Chriſtianity* is ſaid to have *preſerved, in many reſpects, a ſtrong tang of the ſpirit of Judaiſm.* If we except the oddneſs of the expreſſion, we may admit the remark. Many particulars are ſimilar in theſe two diſpenſations. Nay, they may juſtly be thought one and the ſame holy diſpenſation, gradually revealed; firſt imperfectly in types and figures, and now fully compleated and manifeſted. This is the light, in which the Apoſtle to the Gentiles himſelf conſiders them . . . But ſurely it cannot be ſaid that Chriſtianity hath any tang of partiality or ill temper. And if this be what his Lordſhip meant, his obſervation is moſt untrue, and inconſiſtent with what he has elſewhere allowed.

The noble Lord entirely miſtakes *the Chriſtian notion of rewards and puniſhments*, when he *repreſents* it, *as obſerving no proportion between the various degrees of merit and demerit.* The goſpels very ſufficiently obviate any ſuch pretence. With regard to rewards, the parable of the talents is full, clear, and deciſive. And as to future puniſhments,

niſhments, we need only appeal to thoſe places, where mention is made of " receiving greater damnation," and of being " beaten with many, and with few, ſtripes." So that there will be a proportion, and this ſtrictly juſt and anſwerable to our different conduct.

9. The objection againſt the Chriſtian religion, from its not having been communicated to all mankind, has been frequently conſidered with great accuracy, and anſwered to the fulleſt ſatisfaction. I ſhall not repeat here the ſubſtance of what has been urged. But as Lord Bolingbroke has revived the difficulty, let us confine ourſelves to conſider the reaſons he has been pleaſed to produce. Theſe are, that *all mankind were alike obliged to the terms of the Chriſtian religion*; and that *they, to whom theſe had not been communicated, would dye, and might be damned, in their involuntary ignorance of them.* I muſt ſuppoſe his meaning to have been, for not obſerving the terms which they were obliged to obſerve, though they could not diſcover them. And indeed this ſuppoſition is a ſtrong imputation on the goodneſs of God: And they, who hold it, will find it impoſſible to clear the Chriſtian ſcheme from the objection riſing from the want of univerſality. But

then this is no doctrine of the goſpel; which never teaches, that men are obliged to what they do not know, or will be puniſhed for what they cannot help; and which gives us very different notions both of the juſtice and mercy of God's dealings with mankind. Here then we ſee an arbitrary hypotheſis ſet up, and built upon, as if it had been entirely received and maintained. And therefore *ſound reaſon, and the unprejudiced light of nature*, could not reject our religion, becauſe it was not communicated to all alike. The ſame is the caſe of almoſt all God's other gifts. We are not here favoured all alike: Nor ſhall be hereafter judged by the ſame rule, nor rewarded or puniſhed all alike.

Obſerve farther, that this objection, if it had any weight, does not affect us only in theſe latter ages, but would have had equal weight at the beginning of the goſpel; and might have been with the ſame force propoſed even by thoſe, who were eye witneſſes of miracles. Little then might we expect it from this noble author, who had owned theſe *ſufficient to the converſion of all thoſe who ſaw them*. If this be true, the objection can have no ſtrength. Miracles cannot take place, where there is a prior proof of falſehood. Where then miracles were ſuffi-

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cient to convince, there could be no ſuch proof: And if there was not then, there cannot be now.

UNDER the thirteenth head are comprized three or more articles, *Grace*, *Myſteries*, *Sacraments*, &c. Of grace he yields, that *without an aſſiſtance unknown to reaſon*, i. e. ſuperior to reaſon, what this could not teach or aſſure us of, *it is impoſſible to extinguiſh luſt*; that he *does not mean to exclude the influence of grace in making converts*, *though* he *has no conception of it*, i. e. as we muſt underſtand him, of the manner how this operates; that the *doctrine of co-operating with God*, and the way of ſalvation being open to all who did ſo, appears moderate, reaſonable, and no way repugnant to the ideas of Divine juſtice and goodneſs; and that thus to co-operate is honour enough for the creature . . . All this is right; and is, I truſt, an effectual anſwer to the following paſſages, which are of another tendency.

A religious education, a warm head, and a warmer heart, hope, fear, grief, joy, ſtrong paſſions turned by prejudice and habit to devotion, devotion itſelf nurſing its own principles, the effect in its turn becoming a Vol. I. p. 176.

cauſe uniform and conſtant, or redoubling its force, on the leaſt failure, in acts of attrition, contrition, mortification and repentance . . . theſe repreſented as the cauſes of what is uſually ſuppoſed God's grace, as ſufficient to produce all the behaviour of Saints, confeſſors, or martyrs.

p. 340. Vol. II. p. 282. A myſtery, i. e. a thing unknown
A myſtery is ſomething unintelligible, or any thing more than the ſound of words.

p. 314. The ſacraments ſoon perverted by the fathers, who imitated the heathen myſteries.

Vol. V. p. 29. New thoughts and diſpoſitions given to the mind, and in conſequence, new determinations to the will, muſt alter the ordinary and natural progreſſion of human underſtanding, and reſume our freedom of will.

p. 43. If ſome men were determined to goodneſs by the ſilent workings of the ſpirit, and others not, which they muſt be on the ſuppoſition of particular providences . . .

p. 198. The trite ceremony of baptiſm is made ſo eſſential a part of religion under the vague name of a Sacrament, &c.

1. THE reader cannot fail to obſerve, that the aſſiſtance owned, in the firſt extracts, to be *unknown to reaſon*, and neceſſary to *conquer luſt*, is in theſe laſt totally reſolved into natural

natural cauſes, ſtrong enough to produce the very higheſt and hardeſt inſtances of duty. A good education is indeed the way to ſtrengthen the good diſpoſitions of the mind. Habits of devotion are means of drawing down the Divine aſſiſtance, as well as of co-operating with it, and increaſing it. The power and efficacy of theſe means are undoubted. The different ſucceſs of religious and irreligious perſons, in the matter of ſelf reformation, ſhews this fully. Hence we have great cauſe to uſe theſe means, and great reaſon to be thankful to God for preſcribing them in his holy word . . . But can any one of himſelf know, whether theſe means operate altogether naturally, or partly by the bleſſing and grace of God ſuperadded to them? We are capable of being influenced by our fellow creatures, even when we do not perceive it: Are we not much more by the Father of Spirits? Why then ſhould we not believe the Scripture, when it tells us, that without his grace we can do nothing? Sinners can have no excuſe from hence, who may obtain this, if they will duely apply for it.

But ſetting aſide the ſuppoſition of Divine grace, all the means mentioned by his Lordſhip, and indeed all we can uſe, will little avail

avail againſt the frailty of human nature; nor indeed could they be expected to riſe themſelves to any conſiderable height.

2. According to the other poſitions above, relating to the Divine influences, I may aſk what room is there to talk of our *co-operating with God*, which is before allowed to be reaſonable? Of *particular providences* enough has been ſaid already. A conſequence of our belief of theſe is an expectation of particular grace and help in time of need and temptation, and in anſwer to our prayers. There is nothing abſurd in ſuppoſing, on the authority of Scripture, *the ſilent workings of the ſpirit in our ſouls*. The manner of this we are indeed ignorant of. But it would be preſumptuous to ſuppoſe, that when God gave us our reaſon and liberty, he precluded himſelf from aſſiſting and ſtrengthening either of theſe faculties ever after; or from giving the mind new light, or new thoughts and diſpoſitions, whenever he ſhould pleaſe. And when we feel ourſelves frail and weak, and are aſſured of help from above, it is moſt ungrateful to reject ſuch aſſurances, and to refuſe ſuch offers. We have no reaſon to think, that ordinarily, the ſpirit of God determines bad men irreſiſtibly to goodneſs. In ſuch caſe our freewill might in part be

reſumed

reſumed. But this is not what the Scripture teaches us: And Scripture is anſwerable for no miſrepreſentations or errors of men.

3. The *two Sacraments* Lord Bolingbroke owns to be *certainly Divine ceremonies*; to be *profitable* ceremonies; the inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper to be *moſt intelligible and reaſonable*... And yet he ſays, *the ſacraments were ſoon perverted by the fathers, who imitated the heathen myſteries*... He ſpeaks of *the trite ceremony of baptiſm*... as being *made ſo eſſential a part of religion under the vague name of a ſacrament*... And is not a *Divine ceremony* therefore really an *eſſential part of religion*, to thoſe who are apprized of its appointment? Baptiſm was indeed uſed before in other religions, and adopted by our Saviour. And poſſibly this might be what his Lordſhip meant by calling it a *trite ceremony*. But is it therefore leſs reſpectable, or to be ſlighted or neglected, when ſo expreſsly enjoined in a religion which came from God? No ſurely. As to the fathers, I have not time at preſent to vindicate them from a general accuſation. But I muſt obſerve, that according to his Lordſhip's account of the heathen myſteries, the imitating theſe could be no great offence. For he ſays, Vol. I. p. 354. that *by theſe, leſſons*

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of morality were frequently renewed, habits of piety were ſolemnly maintained; and to enforce them all, that great ſanction, which conſiſts in the rewards and puniſhments of another life... was inculcated ſo, that every man muſt apply it to himſelf, and the impreſſion be laſting... Well then, if the fathers applied the ſacraments to ſuch good purpoſes, forgive them this wrong. If this was a perverſion, it was, we ſee, a profitable and a laudable one. Not but, the ſacraments were in their own nature adapted, and much more than any heathen myſteries were, to anſwer theſe, and other excellent ends.

4. Our noble writer owns *many incomprehenſible doctrines in the goſpel*; that a revealed truth's being myſterious is *no objection to the belief* of it; that *there* is, and needs *muſt be, ſomething marvellous in revelation*; that *human nature cannot penetrate the ſecrets of the Divine nature and oeconomy*... But, he alſo explains a myſtery to be *a thing unknown.* And again, he tells us, *a myſtery is ſomething unintelligible, or any thing more than the ſound of words.* Though he muſt well know, that this term ſignifies, not what is not at all underſtood, but what is not perfectly underſtood; which is the caſe of moſt things of any importance... And ſo far was he, not-

notwithſtanding his own conceſſions, from allowing the myſteries of the goſpel, that we find him frequently declaiming againſt them. Nay, as we have ſeen, he repreſents the law of nature enforced by revelation, as the whole of the Chriſtian law; and the law of nature as containing nothing incomprehenſible. To reconcile all this is far above my mean abilities.

5. Lord Bolingbroke ſays, he *may admit, that* not only *things conſiſtent with the law of nature may be* revealed, but alſo *poſitive precepts about things indifferent may thus become obligatory* ... I will not conceal, that he ſays, *the point is not clear enough to oblige* him *to admit it neceſſarily*. However, at leaſt we may conclude, that ſuch precepts are poſſible. Otherwiſe he could not think himſelf at liberty ſo much as to make a ſuppoſition about them. And as he has owned the ſacraments to be *Divine inſtitutions*, this poſſibility grows up into a certainty; and in order to be conſiſtent, he muſt be obliged to *admit* the point *neceſſarily*. And this, though it will involve him in another contradiction, and quite overthrow his ſcheme of making the law of nature the whole ſubſtance of revealed religion.

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THE reader will probably rejoice with me, that we are come to the fourteenth and laſt head. This relates to *the clergy, the external religion, the reformation.* As to the clergy, it is granted, that *a clergy might be uſeful in ſubordination to the civil magiſtrate*; that *Chriſt ſent out his apoſtles*; *the apoſtles ordained others to ſucceed them*; that *neither they, nor their immediate ſucceſſors, exceeded the bounds of their commiſſion*; that *biſhops were appointed by the apoſtles*, at leaſt in their days, to put an end to *factions*; that *the eccleſiaſtical authority of the clergy was neceſſary before Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by* Conſtantine; that *a reſpect for religion begat a reſpect for them*; that as the *reformation was very beneficial*, ſo they were *eccleſiaſtics which took the lead in it*; and that *our divines themſelves exhort us to examine.*

All this is much for the honour of our clergy. It is owning that their commiſſion is Divine; that they behaved without fault till after the firſt century; that their eccleſiaſtical authority was neceſſary for two more; that they had great merit in the reformation; that they are even now far from deſiring to lead men blindfold, or to be believed implicitly; and that reſpect for religion

gion produces naturally reſpect for them... From whence one would be inclined to think, that diſreſpect to them, and much more ſuch groſs abuſes as we have ſeen, eſpecially at a time when they are peculiarly inoffenſive, muſt proceed from, as well as lead to, a real diſreſpect to religion.

But his Lordſhip was not always in this good humour. To collect all that he has ſaid againſt them in theſe Eſſays, would be to copy out a great part of them, and would be needleſs; as the learned author of the *View*, &c. has been beforehand with me, and has ſet ſome of the groſſeſt paſſages, and bittereſt cenſures, of theſe and other learned men, very properly before his readers. I ſhall only here extract a few, which relate to the authority this order claims.

Religion may ſubſiſt and flouriſh too, without eccleſiaſtical government. Vol. I. p. 326.

The eccleſiaſtical authority of the clergy ... unneceſſary and dangerous after Conſtantine. Vol. III. p. 81.

Neither preſbytery, epiſcopacy, nor popery is *jure divino*. p. 223.

The eccleſiaſtical order not of Divine inſtitution, nor by that inſtitution independent of the ſtate. p. 245.

Excom-

p. 248. Excommunication, before Conſtantine, was a cenſure, an excluſion from Chriſtian congregations: but this cenſure, and this excluſion, operated on the imagination alone; and the puniſhment being imaginary, the power was ſo too.

p. 292. The ſtate of Chriſtianity not mended by the reformation in all particulars.

Vol. V. p. 208. The chimerical weapon of excommunication, forged in the chimerical fire of hell.

A very few remarks will be ſufficient here.

Can religion *flouriſh in the midſt of factions?* Were not theſe, according to the noble Lord, the occaſion of the erection of epiſcopal government? Is it not moſt highly probable, that they would return, if all eccleſiaſtical government was deſtroyed? Can order ſubſiſt in any ſociety, civil or religious, without ſome polity? Can national religion (ſee ſhead the ſecond) be at all ſupported without an eſtabliſhed clergy ... If *Chriſt ſent his apoſtles* with powers *to teach, baptize,* &c. if theſe *ordained others,* and even *appointed biſhops*; ſurely the eccleſiaſtical order muſt be owned to be of Divine inſtitution. Theſe powers thus received from Chriſt, were neither derived from, nor dependent upon the ſtate; I mean not ſo dependent, as that

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it can forbid, though indeed it may regulate, the exerciſe of them; having the ſame authority over the perſons of thoſe, who are inveſted with them, which it hath over other men. And the clergy, as well as the ſpiritual powers they claim, will be always, as well when religion is a civil eſtabliſhment, as when it is not, uſeful and neceſſary to ſociety and government.

An excluſion from Chriſtian congregations is an excluſion from very valuable privileges and benefits. Reaſon tells us, that every ſociety muſt have this power lodged in it, to exclude unruly and diſorderly members. The Goſpels, among other powers granted by Chriſt to his apoſtles, plainly mention this. When duly executed, for I am not pleading for any abuſes of it, the future ſtate of Chriſtians may be affected by it; and others may be thus deterred from abuſing the means of ſpiritual improvement. Indeed if hell be a chimerical notion, the puniſhment of excommunication can be no other than imaginary. But they, who ſeriouſly conſider and fear the one, can have no ſlight notions of the danger of the other. If the Chriſtian ordinances, and the communion of the faithful, be, as moſt undoubtedly they are, helps to-

wards working out our ſalvation, every wiſe and good man muſt be moſt ſolicitous to preſerve his right to them. And if this ſhould be forfeited as a conſequence of any open crimes, we ought to endeavour immediately to be reſtored to them; but ſurely ought not contemptuouſly to deſpiſe ſuch authoritative excluſion from them; which only ſhews the mind to be hardened, and is the way to increaſe every bad diſpoſition.

When Lord Bolingbroke ſays, the ſtate of Chriſtianity was not mended by the reformation, in all particulars, his words are ambiguous; and I am at a loſs to know, whether his meaning was, that the reformation was defective, or that it was in ſome reſpects injurious to our religion. This latter cannot be ſaid with any ſhew of truth. Many errors in doctrine and worſhip were thus diſcovered and removed; but no new ones introduced hereby. At leaſt, if any were entertained by private perſons, who have ſeparated from the church of Rome, this ought not to be imputed to the reformation. Though theſe errors came after it, they were not cauſed by it..... As to the other ſenſe, we may truly boaſt, that our religion was ſo far reformed, as to be a complete rule of life and manners; and to be free

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from every error and every practice, which may be dangerous to ſalvation. And this ſhould incline us thankfully to adhere, and honeſtly to conform, to it; knowing, that if we were to go on reforming, as long as any perſon is, or pretends to be, diſſatisfied, we ſhould ſoon have no religion at all.

2. Our noble author farther grants under this head, *the uſefulneſs of places* ſet apart for public inſtruction and public worſhip; that *ſynagogues ſecured the obſervance of the law*; that the decent performance of church ſervices *cannot fail to inſpire an awful reſpect, and to maintain a devout attention of mind, in the generality.* I would beg, that this may be particularly obſerved: And if we could be ſo happy as to find our Chriſtian worſhip and ſervice regularly and univerſally attended, I dare ſay, that ſuch awful reſpect, ſuch devout attention, would ſoon end in the increaſe of ſound religion, and real virtue, among us; and we ſhould become, in every reſpect, a wiſer and an happier people.

HAVING now finiſhed my intended Analyſis of the late Lord Bolingbroke's Philoſophical Works, I ſhall leave it to the reader to conſider, whether he had any right to ſay, as he does, Vol. II. p. 392. *my way of think-*

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ing, which I have found no where the leaſt reaſon to alter. If this was his real opinion, we muſt ſay at leaſt, that his memory very frequently failed him.

However, I find his Lordſhip uttering another ſentence, which, tho' by no means univerſally true, is too much verified in theſe works; and which I think ſo highly worthy of notice, that I ſhall conclude this tract with it.

Vol. II. p. 164. GREAT MEN TAKE GREAT LIBERTIES, AND EXPECT TO BE BELIEVED ON THEIR WORDS.

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BRITANNICVM

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